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ABSTRACT

The series of articles in this volume were selected from among those presented at the 8th Annual International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning in April 1994. Articles include: "The Right Tool for the Job: Techniques for Analysis of Natural Language Use" (Georgia M. Green); "Sinclair & Coulthard Revisited: Global- and Local-Allocational Turn-Taking Mechanisms in the Language Classroom" (Willfred J. Greyling); "Where Does Sociopragmatic Ambiguity Come From?" (Susan Meredith Burt); "Routine and Indirection in Interlanguage Pragmatics" (Gabriele Kasper); "Face Orientations in Reacting to Accusatory Complaints: Italian L1, English L1, and Italian as a Community Language" (Marina Frescura); "The Perception of Social Context in Request Performance" (Montserrat Mir); "Pauses and Co-Construction in Chinese Peer Review Discussions" (Hao Sun); "'I Must Be Seated To Talk to You': Taking Nonverbal Politeness Strategies into Account" (Elizabeth de Kadt); and "Topical Structure in Arabic-English Interlanguage" (Ahmed Fakhri). (MSE)

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Pragmatics and Language Learning consists of papers selected each year from those presented at the annual conference sponsored by the Division of English as an International Language and the Intensive English Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The general theme of this conference each year is on the interaction of pragmatics (including discourse analysis and conversation analysis) with the teaching and/or learning of a second or foreign language (especially English) in either formal or informal surroundings. Individuals papers may be focused on any of the following or related topics:

1. the contribution of pragmatics to our understanding of what we mean by communicative competence
2. research into specific facets of English discourse
3. contrastive pragmatics
4. analysis of the discourse patterns found in the language classroom

The purpose of both the conference and this monograph series is to serve as a forum for research into the pragmatics of the language learning process and to encourage the interaction of scholars involved in pragmatics and in language pedagogy in a common effort to increase the level of communicative competence achieved in the language classroom.

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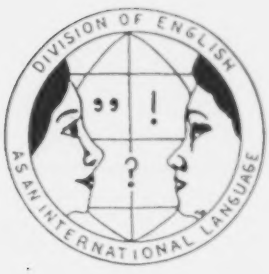

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INTRODUCTION

The series of articles in this volume were selected from among those presented at the 8th Annual International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning in April, 1994. The first, "The Right Tool for the Job: Techniques for Analysis of Natural Language Use," by Georgia Green, could be by itself an excellent handbook for anyone intending to gather and analyze "information about the natural use of natural languages." As the title suggests, it urges us to seek the right tool for whatever job our research requires. Beginning with a general discussion of the domain of language use and its three interacting components (linguistic systems, language users and societal aspects), Green moves on to the types of questions they raise about language use in any particular context and to techniques for answering them. Large language corpora, audio recordings, and various interactive techniques - their uses and limitations as resources available to any investigator - all of these she presents to us in her richly compact style and provides us with an excellent entree to the articles that follow.

W.J. Greyling's "Sinclair & Coulthard Revisited: Global- and Local-Allocational Turn-Taking Mechanisms in the Language Classroom," Studies two types of language classroom interchange: that focused on the development of accuracy and that aimed at the development of fluency. Basing his argument on authentic classroom data, excellent examples of which he provides both in the text and in the appendices, he demonstrates that each of these interaction types can be characterized in terms of the role of the teacher in each and predicted on the basis of the type of turn allocation at any particular point in the classroom interaction. Furthermore, by providing teachers with this set of predictive devices, Greyling has given them a basis from which "to make informed decisions in the classroom. . . that may be useful in promoting teacher awareness of what they are doing. Teach decision-making and empowerment," he argues, "are at the heart of the prediction system outlined in this paper."

With Burt's "Where Does Sociopragmatic Ambiguity Come From?" we turn our attention to a question that has arisen as a result of Burt's investigations into the impact of code switching between speakers, both of whom speak the other's native language, but not with great proficiency. In this context, speakers can choose to use their own native language (with the possibility that the other participant(s) may have difficulty understanding what is said, or speaking in that language when their own turn comes, or they can use the language of their interlocutor, which may cause some trouble for themselves. Given these options and their potentially face-threatening impact on the other participants in a conversation, which language a speaker decides to use is frequently assigned a social meaning in and of itself -- aside from any linguistic or other meaning that the utterance may have. Furthermore, Burt argues, a similar type of social meaning is related to a speaker's decision to use one address pronoun or another, e. g. , *tu/vous*. In both of these cases, an ambiguity often arises as to exactly what social meaning speakers intend to convey by their choice, and it this ambiguity to which the author addresses her attention here.

In "Routine and Indirection in Interlanguage Pragmatics," Kasper uses the concepts of *convention of means* and *conventions of form* as a frame within which to discuss the use of routine and indirection in different contexts in which language learners find themselves.

Using examples from the literature, along with a few anecdotes, Kasper argues that "learners' social environment and learning context need closer attention if we wish to gain better understanding of the acquisition of routines and indirectness by nonnative speakers." Though she cites numerous examples of language learners who have developed the necessary understanding to the effective use of pragmatic routines, this has not always been the case, she notes, even after years of exposure to the culture underlying the target language. And so, Kasper argues, "closer attention needs to be paid to the social context of L2 learning, and to the learning opportunities afforded by different environments of L2 acquisition. . . . It remains to be examined,"she continues, "what instructional options are best suited to help students in different social environments and learning contexts improve their knowledge and skill in using routine and indirection efficiently in L2."

With Frescura's Face Orientation in Reacting to Accusatory complaints: Italian L2, English L2, and Italian as a Community Language, "is the first of two studies of different speech acts. The focus of Frescura's investigation was the politeness strategies of first generation Italian immigrants living in Toronto. Using native speakers of Italian living in Italy and of Canadian English, the author tested her hypothesis that those strategies, together with the variables eliciting them, would have moved away from those of the Italians and toward those of the Canadians as a result of their having taken up residence among the latter. In the process, she introduces us to new procedures for collecting and analyzing data with the goal of understanding "both the relationship between the preferred and dispreferred status of second components of an adjacency pair, and the face-orientation of a given speech community."

Mir, in "The Perception of Social Context in Request Performance," looks at the extent to which the control over the social context provided the investigator by devices such as the DCT can be relied upon to guarantee that a subject's perception of the environment in which the speech act is to take place will be the one intended by the investigator setting it up. What she finds is that situational and cultural factors involved in any such context interact with each other so that the same request may be more or less of an imposition depending on who is asking it of whom; the power of one participant over the other will depend upon how close they are to each other on the scale of social distance. Based on these and other findings, Mir concludes that "We should not assume that in building controlled elicitation tasks where social variables are controlled and represented in many contexts, subjects are going to assess social factors similarly among themselves and also as the researcher planned them. With this in mind, she urges researchers to focus a certain amount of their attention on what perceptions subjects have of the social parameters that they find in the situations with which they are confronted during the study.

"Pauses and Con-construction in Chinese Peer Review Discussions" by Hao Sun uses the Comparative Rhetoric Model (Saville-Troike and John son, 1994) to examine the discourse behavior of native speakers of American English conducting peer review sessions (in English) with native speakers of Chinese. In the process, Sun noted interesting differences in the strategies employed by these two groups. While the Chinese used a strategy labeled *co-construction* with some frequency, that device was not found in the American discourse at all. Also, the use of pauses by the two groups differed both in terms

of the location at which the pauses occurred and the frequency with which these pauses occurred.

Elizabeth deKadt, in her "'I Must Be Seated to Talk to You': Taking Nonverbal Politeness Strategies into Account," demonstrates the importance of broadening our studies of politeness beyond the purely verbal. Her data come from role play carried out in English by native speakers of Zulu, in which one player acts the part of a professor, the other of a student. Her conclusion -- that "posture, gesture and gaze contribute substantially to marking status and hence to negotiating the interaction under consideration as polite." And, she suggests, American and British English could both benefit from a similar detailed, multi-faceted approach to the study of politeness.

For the last paper in this volume, Fakhri's Topical Structure in Arabic-English Interlanguage, "we turn to a discussion of the extent to which the writing of Arab learners of English in an ESL context was influenced by their L1 competence and by their IL competence developing in their L2. At the same time, the author evaluates various methods of evaluating the data and determines that the approach taken n this study is necessary for providing reliable evidence for cross-linguistic differences and/or transfer.

THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB: TECHNIQUES FOR ANALYSIS OF NATURAL LANGUAGE USE*

Georgia M. Green

This article[1] surveys a variety of techniques for collecting and analyzing information about the natural use of natural languages. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing the properties of a task that make a given technique more or less suitable for it, rather than comparing techniques more globally and attempting to rank them in any absolute fashion. Thus, an initial goal is to characterize the sorts of tasks that are involved in research on language use. The conclusion is that no single tool is good for everything (the best screwdriver makes a lousy hammer, and a worse saw). It follows from this that disputes about which tools are "best" boil down to questions about the values and assumptions that have implications for which tasks are important.

INTRODUCTION

When Searle (1969) popularized the notion of speech acts twenty-five years ago, it triggered an unprecedented explosion of interest in the study of language use. Today, groups large and small study in more or less systematic ways principles of language use governing large and small classes of linguistic acts (ranging in scope from whole texts and interactions to monosyllabic interjections), at finer and grosser degrees of granularity. The techniques that they have developed for answering the myriad of questions that researchers are stirred to ask are so diverse that many researchers are unfamiliar with more than a few. There is a concern that the growing focus on techniques threatens to fractionate the field of pragmatics research into warring camps of paranoid cults, each believing they have found the One True Way to investigate questions of language use.

It turns out (hardly surprisingly) that belief in One True Way entails circumscribing the set of questions that define the field to just those that can be answered by that One True Way, and naturally enough, different ideas about the One True Way determine sets of questions that are not congruent with each other.

The purpose of this article is therefore frankly ecumenical: all of the techniques discussed are valuable, though they are not all valuable for the same task. Thus, the first task is to describe the character of pragmatics research in terms of a broad view of the domain of language use, and to outline the sorts of questions one might ask, and the sorts of information required to answer them. In this context, it is easier to see what sort of technique is most useful for getting a handle on the specific sort of information that is desired.

THE TERRITORY

Since what tasks are required in the study of pragmatics is a function of the knowledge sought, I begin by characterizing what kinds of knowledge we seek as investigators of pragmatics.

Pragmatics is about language USE, so the goal here must be to learn when and why particular linguistic forms are USED. We don't know, a priori, if answers to these questions are to be found by understanding such questions in terms of the structure of abstractions treated as formal structures, or in terms of assumptions and motives or language users, it will be important to frame the goals so as not to preclude any possible answers. (I do have a bias here, but I will try to keep its interference at a minimum.) Suppose we phrase the questions this way:

- What are the significant classes of uses of language? (i.e., what are the identifying properties of the various phenomena of interest?)
- What governs the distribution of members (or tokens) of the classes (or types)? That is, under what circumstances do we expect to find an instance of one type rather than another?

THE DOMAIN OF LANGUAGE USE

There are so many aspects of language use that any single classification imposes a distortion on the analysis of research issues. Consequently, to organize the discussion of techniques in terms of tasks, I will try to elucidate the relations among the subfields of pragmatics research in terms of a cross-cutting multiple-perspective approach.

Language use in context is, evidently by definition, a complex function of three things: 1) properties of the linguistic system, abstracted away from particular occasions of use, 2) properties of language users, independent of what language, if any, they choose to use for communicating and for affecting and effecting events, and 3) properties of the societies within which a particular speaker elects to use a particular language on a particular occasion of use.

Linguistic Systems

Languages provide means of structuring information in two quite distinct ways. First of all, individual words and their relations to other words provide conceptual categories according to which objects and events perceived to be real might be classified and treated as the same or different. This alone is enough to keep an army of pragmaticists busy, exploring the programme outlined by Nunberg (1978) in *The Pragmatics of reference* to explain how people unconsciously gauge what set of referents might be (expected to be) intended for a particular word on an occasion of use. The problem is illustrated in (1), but that is only the beginning.

(1a) Raccoons are herbivorous.
(1b) Raccoons knocked over a garbage can and had a pizza party on my porch last night.
(1c) Raccoon has more cholesterol than squirrel.
(1d) Raccoon is warmer than chinchilla.

Of additional interest to pragmaticists is the fact that some words have invariable conventional implicatures (presuppositions) associated with their use. Thus, use of active verbs, as in (2), conventionally implicates a presupposition that the content of their complement is true.

(2) Kim realizes that the Board is corrupt.

The use of a variety of other words and morphemes (especially, say, pronouns and honorific affixes) is associated with presuppositions about the social relations among speech act participants and referents of expressions in utterances.[2] Still others, typically adverbs (*consequently*, *however*, *moreover*, *thus*, *now*, *so*) and conjunctions (*but*, *since*) and particles (*well*, *why*, *like*, *OK*, *y'know*) give information about how (the speaker believes) one part of the discourse relates to another, or how an utterance relates to the addressee's attitude or belief system.

Languages also have constraints on how words go together to make phrases, and particular phrasal constructions may be of interest to pragmaticists as well, because their use may (sometimes or always) imply information above and beyond what is predictable from information in the constituent parts and their semantic relation to each other. For example, in many languages, using a passive construction implies a belief that the event described significantly affected the referent of the passive subject (often adversely). Similarly, if one uses a transitive construction that is truth-conditionally equivalent to a construction that treats its direct object as having some other grammatical relation (as in Raising and Dative Alternation sentences), it often implies a belief that interactive potential exists between the referents of the subject and direct object (Green, 1974; Postal, 1974), as in (3) as compared to (4).

(3a) Dan won Jane a gold medal.
(3b) Tracy expected Al to sleep late.

(4a) Dan won a gold medal for Jane.
(4b) Tracy expected that Al would sleep late.

There are shelves of literature just from the last twenty-five years on the specific pragmatic implications of the use of such constructions, going beyond Passive, Raising, and the Dative Alternation, and past Extraposition, Topicalization, Reflexivization, and Inversion to include practically every construction that has been given a name, and many that haven't; the Construction Grammar being developed at Berkeley particularly fosters attention to such matters. It is probably safe to speculate that use conditions exist in every language for any construction whose content could be conveyed in a less complex construction, following principles of contrast elucidated in work by Horn (1984, 1989).

Language Users

The properties of language users---speakers and addressees and overhearers---that figure into the description of how a bit of language is appropriately used are their beliefs and intentions. It is not their actual social status or their relative authority (in any sense of the word), but their beliefs about such things and about each other's beliefs about such things that make a difference. Similarly, simple intentions aren't really relevant either. What counts is not an intention that an addressee do some particular thing, but an intention to get her to recognize that the speaker intends that the uttering of some particular expression will get her to recognize that the speaker wants her to do that thing. Thus, the relevant beliefs are 1) beliefs about objects and events in the real world (or any hypothetical world defined in the course of the discourse), 2) beliefs about what interpersonal behaviors are valued by the culture, and what beliefs are routinely ascribed to all normal adult members of the culture, and 3) beliefs about what things have been referred to in the ongoing discourse (however defined) and what has been said about those things and how the presentation of that information has been structured. Some or all of these are involved in the use of pronouns and other deictic and indexical expressions, in the choice of register, and in the negotiation of turn-taking. Finally, the set of relevant beliefs also includes, of course, beliefs about one's interlocutor's beliefs about all of these. The relevant intentions are intentions to change the world, ordinarily by affecting belief states or intentions of an addressee (which already changes the world), typically with an eye to getting her to eventually do something, which will change the world in additional ways. This characterization is intended to cover every conceivable speech act at every imaginable level, from acts of reference and predication to statements and questions and directives to promises and requests and apologies accomplished by utterance of them, to insults and compliments conversationally implicated by such utterances, to third- or fourth-order demonstrations of empathy or politeness that such conversational implicatures might effectuate, and so on. Conversational implicatures arise from the assumption that it is reasonable (under the particular circumstances of the speech event in question) to expect the addressee to infer that the speaker intended the addressee to recognize the speaker's intention in uttering whatever she or he uttered from the fact that the speaker uttered it. Because conversational implicature is based on inferring intentions for actions generally, not just linguistic actions, it is a function of human behavior generally, rather than being something specifically linguistic.[3] As researchers, we face the challenge of determining which of the propositions that go into an implicature are universal, which are culture-specific, and which are linked to specific bits of language.

Societal Aspects

The third dimension of language use that imposes a classification on instances is a projection of the fact that languages do not exist in the abstract, but are associated with particular societies. More specifically, it follows from the fact that languages are systems of CONVENTIONS, the acceptance of which presupposes--one might even say, defines--a society. Conventional aspects of language thus include 1) the conventions of form and of the form-meaning correspondence that constitute the grammar of the language, 2) the conventional beliefs and values that constitute the shared culture of the society, and 3) the conventions of language use (Morgan, 1978), which are language-specific, and yet not strictly part of the grammar of the language. These latter include the enumeration of various

speech-act formulae (e.g., greetings, curses), idioms, and conventionalized (short-circuited) implicature, as well as other rhetorical conventions of the culture, addressing, for example, discourse structure, and modes of indicating it. (Of course, there is no claim here that the conventional beliefs and values, and the conventions of form have to converge in defining a single society; only that at the time of a particular instance of language use, the speaker behaves as if she recognizes that she is operating under the relevant societal conventions in all cases.)

Within the structure provided by these conventions, we all know that individuals make creative use of (conventionally) fixed resources. Speakers (depending on their personality, their wit, and their wont) exercise their creativity in constructing referential terms (through, for example, compounding and metaphor), in choosing to communicate less directly via conversational implicature, and in constructing texts and discourses such as jokes, arguments, explanations, and narratives. For example, a speaker may choose to use an agentless passive to implicate that the identity of the agent of an act referred to is unknown, or irrelevant, or unrevealable. Or she may not mean it to implicate anything at all. Interpreting and disambiguating utterances and negotiating turn-taking all involve modelling one's interlocutor's model of the discourse, and coordinating contributions according to a model believed to be shared.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF QUESTIONS

Just as these three dimensions cross-classify familiar instances of language use, so do they determine different kinds of questions about the deployment of particular forms or types of language use.

Questions About Language Users

Perhaps the most basic research questions in pragmatics have to do with language users and their states of mind on the occasion of use. Why does saying X produce a different effect than saying Y? For example:

Well, vs. *Why*,
Can you VP vs. *Are you able to VP*
tu vs. *vous*

Why does X say Y? What is the purpose of saying Y? What characterizes the occasions of use on which Y is used? Hypotheses about the answers to given questions might involve

properties of the speaker,
properties of the addressee,
properties of the relation between speaker and addressee, as well as
beliefs and/or
goals of the speaker.

Questions About Culture

Higher-order questions of language use may be linked to culture and societal convention. For example: Is Y (some type of language-use) defined the same way in Culture A and Culture B? Are the subtypes of Y the same in both cultures? If so, are the principles governing their distribution the same? Do they have the same relative frequency? If not, to what should the difference be attributed? Are they used for the same purposes? Are they used in the same contexts? (This is probably the same question, in different clothing.) What makes using Y polite/rude? Is it always polite/rude? Why is it hard for speakers of Language A to learn to use X appropriately when speaking Language B?

Structural Questions

Finally, questions may be framed, wholly or largely, in terms of structures or forms: What properties of the structure of a discourse determine or affect the distribution of form Y or type Y? What structural properties of a form determine or affect its distribution in a discourse? What are the formal or structural subtypes of a particular type of use--i.e., what kinds of linguistic forms can instantiate this use?

SORTS OF TECHNIQUES FOR GETTING ANSWERS.

As researchers we obviously don't go directly from identifying a research question to "gathering data" that we expect to bear on its resolution. There is always the intermediate step of latching on to a hypothesis which strikes us as a potential answer, or a set of alternative hypotheses. Once we have a hypothesis, we make a beeline for data that will test it, and either corroborate it, or disconfirm it. (We do this not because we are following some prescribed scientific method, but just because we have operational minds and act rationally.) It matters little where the hypotheses themselves come from--we may regard them as gifts from the muses. What data we want depends on what hypotheses we want to test, and we can't rationally collect data unless we have a hypothesis. If we try, we quickly realize that we don't know how far afield to range, or when we have enough, because we don't know what we're looking for. There is no such thing as theory-independent research. Research is always defined within the framework of some sort of theory (i.e., hypothesis) however generic or underspecified it may be.

Obviously, the kind of information being sought must affect the choice of technique to find it. If you want to know whether words supposedly belonging to the same register distribute the same way across genres, no amount of interviewing speakers, no matter how cleverly, will provide the kind of definitive quantitative data that electronic searches of large, sorted corpora can provide. If you want to know what sorts of beliefs are reflected in the use of some particle, or some special morphology, no amount of studying transcriptions of natural speech, no matter how finely described, will yield an answer, if that is all that is examined. If you want to investigate what beliefs are reflected in the use of some form, you have to be in a position to make testable inferences about beliefs. Because inferences drawn from recorded positive data need to be confirmed by judgements on corresponding negative data, producing a contrast set (a minimal pair) to test whatever hypothesis beckons entails

dealing with constructed data, and with intuitions about hypothetical uses in hypothetical contexts.

"Natural Speech" Only?

Since I've brought up the I-word (*introspection*), perhaps prematurely, something must be said about the value-laden distinction between research that starts with a body of natural speech and research that is organized around discourse segments constructed by an investigator. First off, it is doubtful that this is a very useful distinction to make; it generates all the heat and passion and excessive rhetoric of abortion policy debates (including ideologically-driven disputes over nomenclature--there is an agenda behind the decision to call imagined discourse "artificial" or "constructed"), with only a shadow of the significance.

There are three reasons to consider it a less than useful distinction. First, the same sorts of reasons that motivate a distinction between competence and performance militate against the glorification of The Actually Said (I warned you about it generating excessive rhetoric, didn't I?): it makes it impossible to distinguish between slips of the tongue and intended utterances.

Second, it is not clear that the distinction can be drawn in a useful way. Surreptitious recording of spontaneous speech yields natural data, but, for good or ill, it is considered unethical, and contrary to the guidelines for research on human subjects. Overtly recording natural conversation subjects the data to the charge of experimenter influence: how can we know that people didn't put on airs or become inhibited and talk unnaturally precisely because they knew they were being recorded? There are various large, electronically accessible collections of connected text which are considered "natural language" (i.e., found objects, as it were), but the recorded language is largely written language, that is, planned discourse, and open to the charge of being artificial, and/or artistically manipulated rather than truly natural and spontaneous. Actually, of course, all speech is subject to this charge--we all try to be witty on occasion--so it's not clear that written text (newswriting, exposition, narrative) is necessarily inferior to spoken language. But if written narrative and fictive dialog are valid sources of natural language use, why should it make a difference whether the writer got paid for it, or is a linguist (and therefore, didn't get paid)? There must be bad writers and good writers in both groups. The fact that the language got written down, or the purpose for which it got written is surely too crude a criterion to distinguish the useful from the not so useful.

Finally, all language use is use in context. With natural speech, we know that it was used in a context, but we can never know that we have the relevant information about that context. The factors we bring to bear as analysts in interpreting and/or classifying that particular bit of speech are what we IMAGINE about the speaker's beliefs and intentions regarding the effect of the utterance upon the addressee, whether or not we recognize it either implicitly or explicitly. Thus, there would seem to be no particular significance to knowing whether someone actually said a particular bit of speech, or only might have said it.

That said, what follows is an overview of techniques organized along the 'spontaneous-vs.-constructed' dimension, ranging from uses of large, electronically accessible databases of connected discourse, to detailed representations of the physical aspects of speech, to an assortment of clever and useful variations on the Linguist's Creed ("Can you say this?") that have been developed over the past 25 or 30 years.

LANGUAGE USE RESOURCES

Large Corpora

A variety of large, machine-readable corpora of connected English discourse (some of it parsed) are readily accessible through the Oxford Text Archive and the International Computer Archive of Modern English (ICAME) in Norway, the best-known of these corpora being the million-word Brown Corpus of printed English. The Brown corpus of American English (compiled in the 1960s), and the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus (LOB, compiled in the 1970s to match the Brown corpus as closely as possible), consist of 500 "randomly"[4] selected 2000-word samples of discourse from fifteen genres (including newswriting, academic prose, science fiction, romantic fiction, skill and hobby instruction, and humor). The London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English, compiled in the 1970s and 1980s, contains half a million words of prosodically transcribed monologue and dialogue, with individual words annotated (or TAGGED) for part-of-speech, and segments identified by speaker demographics (e.g., "female undergraduate, age 20"). Some of the dialogue is face-to-face, and some is recorded surreptitiously. The Scandinavians have been cranking out studies of discourse particles and syntactic constructions from such data for years.[5] A recent book devoted entirely to transcription and coding in discourse research (Edwards and Lampert, 1993: *Talking Data*) allocates an whole chapter (Edwards, 1993) to a survey of electronic corpora and related resources, and it has complete access information for many of these.

In addition to the ready-made corpora, you can roll your own. With an optical scanner, or by transcribing your own audiotapes, you can fashion a corpus tailored to your particular needs. Public language (political speeches, public lectures, radio and TV talk shows (especially call-in shows) can be recorded for personal use (including non-commercial research), and often networks are willing to provide transcripts at low cost. (The transcripts may be fairly primitive, from a linguist's point of view, because they may edit out much language use of interest (such as hesitations and repetitions), but they still save time in the preparation of a more useful transcript from tapes. For that matter, books that are compilations of edited interviews, like Studs Terkel's *Working* (1972) and *Division Street* (1967), are useful for investigating the use of particular words and constructions.)

If you want a tagged or parsed corpus, there are public-domain taggers and parsers.

Uses. The key virtue of machine-readable corpora is that they can be machine-processed to scout the variety of uses of any form that can be specified as a string of characters. They provide easy access to large amounts of relatively unselected data, the searching of which by hand would be prohibitively tedious, and indubitably liable to oversight. The utilities for searching for defined strings of characters that come with practically every word-processing

program can be used to locate every instance of a form that matches the defined string of characters, for example: you know or OK or okay or but or therefore. Concordancing programs that index selected strings and save them to a file with as much surrounding text as you desire are not quite a dime a dozen, but there are several available, and some are free or nearly so.

Parsed corpora, and to a lesser extent, tagged corpora, are very useful for quickly gathering a large sample of instances of a construction type (rather than a particular word) whose use is of interest. Suppose, for example, that you wanted to study the use of the passive. If you tried to collect instances by searching for all words ending in *-ed* (*ed), not only would you have to sift through unwanted nouns (*bed*), verbs (*trembled*), and adjectives (uninhabited), you would miss all the passives with irregular participles, like *rung*, *thought*, *struck*, etc. If you tried to locate relative clauses introduced by *that*, you would have to wade through instances of demonstrative articles and pronouns and complement clauses introduced by *that* as well. If you wanted to survey relative clauses with no introducer (like *the horse I rode*), you'd be plumb out of luck. However, if you can search a parsed corpus for passive verb phrases or relative clauses, finding what you're interested in becomes a lot easier.

As mentioned earlier, the most universal appeal of large, machine-readable corpora is the opportunity they afford for scouting the territory, for getting a glimpse of the variety of contexts in which the form or construction of interest appears. In my experience, this variety is dependably many times greater than the investigator imagines before performing the search.[6] In addition, machine-readable corpora are ideal for researching quantitative properties of texts or text-types, since it is a relatively simple matter to get computers to count instances of things, and compute ratios (say, of definite to indefinite articles, or words per sentence).

Finally, the ability to use the blind-search capacity of computerized interfaces to machine-readable text corpora in order to search for certain sorts of correlations is perhaps of broader interest. Such interfaces (which can be as simple as a text-editor for word-processing) are especially useful for this since they eliminate the need to pre-analyze the corpus and code up every property of potential interest in every segment into machine-interpretable form so that a number-crunching program can look for correlations at a specified level of significance. This is potentially a real boon, because of all the decisions that have to be made in coding a text this way, including even what principles to use to segment it. If any one of them turns out to have been a bad decision, the whole corpus may have to be re-coded before searching can resume. If the properties of actual interest are identifiable as annotations in the corpus, concordancing programs enable searches for

< string > within N < units of text: words/characters/turns... > of < string >

You can search just the relevant segments of the corpus, and do your own tabulating, and feed the numerical results to a statistics program to determine their statistical significance.

One might search for correlations among such machine-accessible properties of text segments as use of particular forms (expressions or constructions), speaker demographics (e.g., age, sex), text genre, among others. Researchers might be interested in correlations

of such properties with presumed local goals of speakers, that is, speech act types. Unfortunately, corpora don't come with speech acts tagged, so you're on their own here, and will have to come to grips with the conversational nature of speech acts: often utterances represent several acts at the same time, some relatively direct and some by implicature from those. Thus, stating *I got it for you yesterday* might be an explanation, and by virtue of being an explanation, a rationalization or an excuse, or a refusal.

Of course, finding correlations is probably not so valuable as an end in itself as it is as a source of new hypotheses. Correlations that are reproducible over different sets of data are not just robust results. They are also mysteries to be explained. Any speculation about why X and Y correlate is a new hypothesis to be tested. And of course, correlations can themselves constitute an indirect test of a hypothesis. If form X is claimed to serve some function Y, and it is accepted that Y is a typical function of texts of type Z, then the hypothesis will be corroborated by discovering that X appears more frequently in texts of type Z than in texts of types where Y is not a salient or typical function. Of course, if there are more direct ways to test the hypothesis, then it's only a weak corroboration. Svartvik (1990), Garside, Leech, and Sampson (1987), and Johansson and Stenstroem (1991) offer a variety of perspectives on building and exploiting parsed corpora.

Limitations. Glowing endorsements aside, there are limits to the utility of electronic corpora. For one thing, they offer nothing to the study of usages whose form is not characterizable as strings of characters or representations of syntactic structures, and typically research on particular sorts of speech acts falls into this category, since any speech act can be accomplished by an unlimited variety of forms--typically, a few performative forms (like *I apologize*), a larger number of forms which are used to accomplish the act by conventionalized conversational implicature (like *I have to apologize*, *I'm afraid I have to apologize*), and an unlimited number of forms the utterance of which conversationally implicates the goals and attitudes that characterize that particular speech act, for example, in the case of apologies: *I really feel awful about that, I hope you'll forgive me, It was really thoughtless of me to do that, Tell me what I can do to fix things, How can I make it up to you?* When cultural values make creativity of expression a hallmark of sincerity, it becomes virtually impossible to specify the class of utterances which are used to perform any speech act in terms of the words and syntax employed.

Second, while I've made parsed corpora sound like the best thing since microwave ovens, they are only as good as the parser and the grammar behind them. There are a lot of pretty good parsers around, both human and inhuman, but there isn't much in the way of comprehensive grammars for automated parsers to use. The best of the grammars only cover a small fragment of the language they describe. For example, I have yet to find a machine-readable grammar of English that can parse with any semblance of utility focus-inversion sentences like *In the corner lay a tattered paperback*, a construction whose uses have engaged me for over 20 years.

Moreover, if an automated parser doesn't just fail to provide a parse when it encounters a sentence with a construction not specifically described in its grammar, the off-the-shelf parse which its default mechanism may provide may be an off-the-wall parse, for example,

treating a sequence of words it can't parse otherwise as representing a noun-noun compound like *employment resources director hiring*.

Even hand-corrected parsed corpora like the Penn Treebank (Santorini, 1990) are only as good as the linguists who did the correcting, and the tag-set and the grammatical theory that they used to do it.

Finally, it is unclear how to interpret statistical descriptions of language use within a corpus, because it is unclear what the sample of texts would be a representative sample of. If eighty percent of the samples came from, say, highly educated white Americans, what does that make the corpus a sample of? If the class, occupation, sex, age, education, dialect (etc.) of the speakers is unrecorded, how do you guess what domain any results generalize to? Worse, because the ways in which and the purposes for which language can be used are unlimited, it is impossible to say how representative of anything ANY particular sample is.

Audio Recordings

Electronically accessible audio-recordings, and detailed, prosodically annotated transcriptions of audio recordings are useful for researching how the prosodic properties of an utterance of an expression correlate with its distribution. A variety of tool kits (some affordable and publically available[7]) exist for electronically analyzing waveforms in audiorecordings, and more seem to be appearing daily.

Uses. Databases of audio-recordings can be used to investigate whether variation in, say, intonation or timing, correlates with any pragmatically relevant aspects of language use, i.e., with demographic properties of speakers, with structural properties of discourses, or with presumed or plausible local goals of speakers. Thus, a person interested in the uses of a discourse particle might discover that it had two very different pronunciations, one with a full vowel that occurred before a pause, and one with a reduced vowel that occurred with what they used to call close juncture, and so be motivated to look for correlations of pronunciation with demographics, discourse function, or speaker attitude.

Limitations. Of course, prosodic analysis is only useful when particular instances of an utterance can be compared with baseline and range information for its speaker. If you don't know what a speaker's normal pitch range and speech rate are, and how both vary with utterance length, you don't know whether a particular piece of an utterance has extra high or low pitch, or whether a brief period of silence should count as a pause.

In addition, if pronunciations are to be correlated with local goals (whether interpersonal or discourse structural), you have to have a way of investigating goals (which presumably reside in the minds of speakers). Actual speakers of recorded discourse usually aren't available to tell you about the goals they had in saying each utterance the way they said it, and rarely can articulate those goals anyway, even if they CAN remember what they were and aren't inclined to misrepresent them in order to protect their self-image. This doesn't mean that goals cannot be researched empirically, only that more subtle techniques are needed to get at them.

Interactive Techniques--Oh, See Can You Say...

Researchers have developed a variety of techniques for testing hypotheses about correlations between usage and intensional attitudes. One way to learn how people's linguistic behavior is affected by having particular sorts of beliefs and goals is to look for a situation where it is reasonable to assume people have those beliefs and goals, and watch to see what they do. For example, you can hang around train stations and eavesdrop on people buying tickets and seeking gate information (Horrigan, 1977; Allen, 1979), or at McDonald's and record them ordering hamburgers (Merritt, 1976). You can record advising sessions or conflict resolution appointments and the like. Or, you can put volunteers in a situation where you can be reasonably certain of their relevant beliefs and goals, and see what they do in that situation. You can show people a videotape and get them to describe it to you, as Chafe's group did in Berkeley in the 1970s with the Pear stories (Chafe, 1980). Or you can set up situations where people have to talk to each other, say, friends describing frightening or embarrassing experiences, or the layouts of their first apartments. In the 1970s, one research project persuaded volunteers to be recorded coaching other volunteers in assembling a toy pump (Grosz, 1977).

Naturally, the more variables that can be controlled, the better the likelihood of getting a meaningful analysis of variation observed in the data. Thus, in the pump assembly experiment, the task was to assist an unseen person in assembling a toy pump, and volunteers were either experts (who had assembled pumps and knew names for the parts and the tools), or novices. Participants knew whether they were talking to other experts or to novices. In the Pear Story experiments, not only was the film plotless, in that the sequence of events filmed was intended not to imply any particular connecting relations among the events, volunteers were allowed, in retelling the events to the experimenters, to make any assumptions they wanted about the level of detail that would be relevant, and about the familiarity of the audience with the events and objects depicted.[8]

At the same time, the more natural the set-up situation is, the more likely that inferences about speech produced in that situation will provide information about the normal use of natural language. Insofar as Pear Story subjects didn't have an internally motivated purpose for retelling what they had seen, the utility of their narratives is diminished by the fact that describing a sequence of events of uncertain import to someone who may or may not be familiar with them is a relatively unnatural act. In addition, to the extent that the respondents inferred or invented a more particular motivating purpose, that constitutes an additional, uncontrolled, source of variation in the data.

Another way of testing hypotheses about the connection between the use of linguistic forms and speaker attitudes uses judgement tasks, in more sophisticated versions of tried-and-true armchair methods. In a series of questions administered as a survey interview, the researcher describes a hypothetical situation where the relevant beliefs and attitudes are explicitly attributed to a speaker, and asks the volunteers what they would expect the speaker to say, or whether some particular response would be more appropriate, or more likely than some others to succeed in accomplishing the goals attributed to the speaker in that situation.

A variation on these methods is to describe a hypothetical situation, and ask volunteers what THEY would say in that situation, or what other people would say, or what other people would say the speaker SHOULD say. Or the researcher might persuade pairs of volunteers to act out the situation, assigning particular roles to each player.

Another well-researched variation, more convenient for mass administration via a written questionnaire, is to describe that situation, and set up a dialogue which respondents are supposed to complete as one of the participants. Such Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) may be open-ended (fill-in-the-blank) (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper, 1989), or multiple choice (Rose, 1992), and respondents may be asked for rankings of possible answers (Hill et al., 1986; Ide et al., 1992). The advantage of written surveys is that they can be administered efficiently, and a large amount of data can be amassed quickly. The disadvantage is that because it is more tiring to write than to speak, responses are likely to be shorter, and may be less carefully considered. Oral interviews, with responses tape-recorded, take longer to administer, and require an investment of time and effort to transcribe, but the results are more likely to contain richer responses--ones which consider the question in greater depth, and from multiple perspectives. They're probably the best way to test reactions to pragmatic minimal pairs, where the context is held constant, and the difference is just the presence or absence of the form in question, or where the form is held constant, and the context is varied minimally in some relevant way. At the same time, transcripts of oral interviews will contain more false starts and vacillation, which may make coding the responses more difficult.

If respondents are interviewed in groups of close friends, one person's contribution may trigger discussion which exposes new dimensions to the issues under investigation. The other side of the coin is that if there is an exceptionally strong personality in the bunch, her responses may inhibit the others from expressing their true opinions.

Asking people about their own behavior in hypothetical situations would seem to enable getting information from the most direct source. But this information can be skewed by people whose quirks of personality prompt them to behave in atypical and idiosyncratic ways. It can also be skewed if the respondent describes not what she believes she actually would do or say, but what she believes she ought to do or say, what she believes society expects of her.

On the other hand, sometimes information about what the respondent thinks she ought to do, or what (she thinks) other people would do is more informative because it gets more directly at the relevant normal beliefs of the culture--what people believe other people believe everyone believes, and this may be more helpful in characterizing the shared beliefs or conventions that govern usage than even accurate reports of idiosyncratically-governed hypothetical behavior.

Researchers who want to know, for pedagogical purposes, how some sort of language use differs across cultures, as well as researchers interested in discovering what universal principles govern language behavior, have an interest in comparing results of the same survey conducted in different cultures. This is not as easy as it sounds. To have genuinely comparable results, the subject pools must be comparable, and it is naive to think that

matching them for age, sex, and education will be enough. A 22-year-old American college student in the U.S. may be a relatively autonomous person living independently of her parents, while her 22-year-old counterpart in another culture may be dependent on her parents for shelter and sustenance. This means that questions about resolving conflicts with a non-family-member with whom the respondent shares living quarters may be entirely beyond the experience of some respondents. Consequently, answers to questions that are superficially the same may not provide comparable information.

Complicating matters further, the situations described in questionnaires and role-playing protocols may be perceived very differently in the different cultures. For example, a request for some particular assistance from a stranger or a social superior that seems unremarkable in one culture might be unthinkable in another.

Although it is probably safe to assume that if something can go wrong, it will, one way to minimize getting non-comparable responses is to include in the research team a member of the other culture who shares not only your understanding of the hypothesis being tested, but also the details of how each projected answer to each questionnaire item tests that hypothesis.[9]

Regardless of where the initial data come from about what people say, or say they would say, or say other people would say, in a given situation, it is often useful to interview respondents about what has been recorded. This can take the form of a play-back protocol where volunteer and researcher review the recorded behavior or questionnaire response, and the volunteer answers questions about why she said this, or what went through her mind when the other person said that. Granted that such responses might be self-serving and so need to be taken with a grain of salt, they can nonetheless provide not only unsolicited corroboration for a hypothesis, but also insight into previously unimagined factors affecting the choice to use some form, which will motivate revising the hypothesis, or the research design, in order to better test the hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

Considering the outline of pragmatics research described here, not much more has to be said about determining which techniques are suited to answering which questions. The hard part of research, as always, is figuring out which questions need to be answered, and being able to roll with the punches, and adjust the question, and the means for testing it as preliminary results reveal more about the domain of inquiry.

As for the practical matter of figuring out the best way to test some particular hypothesis, the best way to test it is to test it in every relevant way possible: questionnaires, interviews, large-scale electronic searches, analysis of natural behavior. Yes, it's an investment, but it is bound to be a worthwhile one; if the results of the tests are not all consistent, you still learn something: namely, that the tests are not all testing the same thing. Figuring out why not, and how to remedy the situation is bound to teach us more about the hypothesis, more about the domain under scrutiny, and more about investigative techniques. How can anyone argue with that?

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NOTES

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[1]These remarks were presented, in slightly different form, to a plenary session of the Eighth Annual International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning, held March 31-April 2, 1994 at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. A number of papers at that conference addressed more specifically some of the particular issues raised here.

[2]For example, the use of referent honorifics is often described in terms of a presupposition that the speaker respects the referent. This is an oversimplification, of course. The speaker doesn't actually have to respect the reference (as represented in such a first-order condition). A more accurate representation of the condition is similar to the conditions Nunberg (1978) described for referential terms, in that it refers to normal beliefs about use of the form: the speaker must believe that (the addressee believes that) it is normally believed that use of the term implies that the speaker respects the referent. This makes the proposition that the speaker respects the referent a conversational implicature of the use of the honorific (cf. Green, 1992). Conversational implicature is addressed in more detail in section on Language Users.

[3]See Green 1993.

[4]The samples were randomly selected from texts that must have been selected on some arbitrary basis; human decisions have to have been involved in determining the categories and the number of samples from each category, and in selecting the texts from which samples might be randomly selected.

[5]Meijs 1987, Tottie and Baecklund 1986, Aarts and Meijs 1990, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik 1980 are representative, and Altenberg 1991 provides a comprehensive biography up to 1990.

[6]Fillmore (1991) describes the experience in detail.

[7]For example, the CECIL system for computerized extraction of components of intonation in language produced by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

[8]Subjects were asked, after being informed that the purpose of the interview was to study how people talk about things they've experienced, to "tell what happened in the movie" to an interviewer who claimed not to have seen it (Chafe, 1980: xiv-xv). It is hard to know how credible the claim of unfamiliarity would be in this context.

[9]In 1993, Lancaster University in England hosted a seminar on introspection in applied linguistics research which covered a lot of these issues, and more, but unfortunately the proceedings are not being published.

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SINCLAIR & COULTHARD REVISITED: GLOBAL- AND LOCAL-ALLOCATIONAL TURN-TAKING MECHANISMS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Willfred J. Greyling

One of the aims of this paper is to outline global- and local- allocational preselection mechanisms for turn-taking in the language classroom. For this purpose, theoretical sampling was used in collecting two corpuses of classroom discourse. Adopting the fluency-accuracy interface, we collected both accuracy- and fluency-based classroom discourse. It was found that teacher-directed accuracy work yielded Initiation-Response-Feedback patterns governed by local-allocational preselection mechanisms for turn-taking, while the fluency-based work was characterised by global-allocational preselection mechanisms for turn-taking which allow learners to produce multiple-utterance responses. The two corpuses of data display typical discourse features which are related to restricting or facilitating learner initiative, single-utterance versus multiple-utterance learner responses, and form versus content feedback. It is shown that these typical discourse features may be used as evidence to confirm or invalidate teacher claims about their modes of language teaching. Indeed, teachers who are aware of these discourse features may generate and test specific predictions about their interactions with learners. It is proposed that teachers cast such predictions in the if-then format in which the if-clause specifies conditions, and the then-clause encapsulates the lingual action or experience which may subsequently occur. A set of if-then predictions is generated and discussed for each corpus of data.

INTRODUCTION

The fluency-accuracy interface in ELT (Cf. Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983, p. 98; Brumfit, 1984, p. 52 and 57) and second language acquisition studies (Cf. Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, pp. 323-325) formed the basis for collecting two corpuses of classroom data. It was argued that these data types would display typical differences. The main aims of this paper are, first, to show that the two modes of language teaching are founded on distinct preselection mechanisms for turn-taking in the language classroom; second, to fuse elements of Personal Construct Psychology and Sinclair & Coulthard's model in generating a discourse-based construct system for predicting the occurrence of distinct Initiation-Response-Feedback sequences in accuracy- and fluency-based teaching; and finally, to indicate that an awareness of these typical IRF patterns, and a concomitant construct network, may promote teachers' decision-making in the classroom.

These aims indicate that the focus is not only on studying classroom discourse for its own sake, but also on how these findings may be used to empower teachers in their decision-making and to promote their awareness of classroom processes. The teacher may use the discourse-based construct system in generating if-then predictions for accuracy- and fluency-based activity, and then, in the interactive phase of the lesson, the teacher may confirm or

invalidate these predictions (Cf. Gribling, Koole, Ten Thije & Tromp, 1983, pp. 50-69 for the distinction between the proactive planning and the interactive emergence of lessons). Both processes of confirming or invalidating our predictions may lead to diversification of our construct systems. For a detailed outline of how constructs are created and modified, see Kelly's theory for more information on the experience, construction, modulation, fragmentation and other corollaries (Kelly, 1955, pp. 72-77 and p. 83; Hergenhahn, 1984, pp. 271-276).

METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

A selected sample of Initiation-Response-Feedback exchanges was taken from both accuracy-based and fluency-based lessons collected at primary and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions in Bloemfontein from 1987 to 1990. The IRF exchange was found to be overwhelmingly present in both corpuses of data. The following criteria were used in classifying exchanges as either accuracy- or fluency-based.

Accuracy-based interactional exchanges display the following features:

a) a metacommunicative focus (i.e., teachers and pupils talk about language)(Cf. Stubbs, 1976, p. 83; Widdowson, 1978, pp. 12-15);
b) teacher control of the discourse (i.e., the teacher takes two out of three turns; or insists on pupil bids as floor seekers, or employs nominations to identify next speaker; or activates a preselection system which is locally managed from one turn to the next);
c) learner responses are single utterances;
d) learner non-responses are followed by one or more teacher clues, directives, re-elicitations, informatives, and/or extended IRF sequences (Cf. Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Sinclair & Brazil, 1982; White & Lightbown, 1984, p. 235; Mehan, 1985, p. 122); and
e) the teacher provides form feedback which focuses on the accuracy of learner responses (Cf. Harmer, 1983, p. 202).

Fluency-based interactional exchanges display the following features:

a) a communicative focus which requires reciprocal language activity (i.e., pupils are required to solve a communication problem or task as found in information gaps, reasoning gaps, and opinion gaps) (Widdowson, 1978, pp. 22-32; Prabhu, 1987, pp. 46-47; Hoey, 1991, p. 68);
b) the teacher structures an interactional space in which communication-gap activities have to be completed (Cf. Stevick, 1980, p. 20; Mazeland, 1983, p. 100;
c) learner answering moves consist of learner-learner exchanges across several turns-at-talk, and if the teacher becomes a co-producer of discourse in a response, he/she abandons his/her authority relationship as a teacher to assume the role of co-communicator;

d) the teacher's role in case of learner difficulties in dealing with a communication task is to facilitate the learners' construction of effective messages within a preselection system which is globally managed (i.e., with multiple learner-learner exchanges preselected by the teacher) (See appendix 4 for an excerpt); and
e) the teacher provides content feedback which focuses on the effectiveness of learner communication as goal-directed, reciprocal language activity (Harmer, 1983, p. 202).

The selected exchanges were then analysed in terms of the columns specified in Sinclair & Coulthard (1975; 1992).

Moreover, a methodological procedure from Personal Construct Psychology was used in identifying constructs for the interpretation of different discourse manifestations of the IRF exchange pattern. Kelly (1955) claims that we create reality in accordance with our construct systems. In fact, our construct systems allow us to make predictions about future events, and our subsequent experiences will then allow us to confirm or invalidate these predictions. If we hope to function within the domain of conscious choice, we have to become aware of our construct systems; and, indeed, this also applies to practising teachers who have to know why they do what they do.

For this reason, it is important to clarify the concept 'construct' and the procedure for identifying constructs. Kelly (1955, pp. 8-9 and p. 12) defines a construct as follows:

> Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templets which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed ... Let us give the name constructs to these patterns that are tried on for size. They are ways of construing the world ... we consider a construct to be a representation of the universe, a representation erected by a living creature and then tested against the reality of that universe. Since the universe is essentially a course of events, the testing of a construct is a testing against subsequent events. In other words, a construct is tested in terms of its predictive efficiency.

This would imply that if the teacher is able to generate if-then predictions in terms of a set of discourse-based constructs, he/she may confirm or invalidate their predictive efficiency against the discourse evidence from the language classroom.

Next, Kelly (1955, pp. 59-61) states that a construct is dichotomous, and that a continuum of possibilities exist in between the poles of a construct. The procedure for identifying the poles of such a construct is the following:

> If we choose an aspect in which A and B are similar, but in contrast to C, it is important to note it is the same aspect of all three, A, B, and C, that forms the basis of the construct ... In its minimum context a construct is a way in which at least two elements are similar and contrast with a third.

Given the methodological orientation, both a language practitioner and a registered psychologist/academic assisted in triangulating the classification and analysis of the data in terms of the guide-lines outlined above (Cf. Van Lier, 1988, p. 13). Then discourse-based constructs were generated for making if-then predictions in the proactive planning of lessons within these modes of ELT. These constructs were used in generating if-then predictions for both an accuracy and a fluency activity. The discourse collected during the interactive phase of the lesson seemed to validate the predictive efficiency of the construct system.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN INITIATION-RESPONSE-FEEDBACK EXCHANGES

The methodological procedure is applied in the analysis of three excerpts of data:

(1) (The teacher is discussing *describing* words with learners.)

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	The tall man stands in the garden. Now what is your describing word in that sentence? Yes.	inf el nom	(NV raises hand) hand) Tall	bid	It is tall. The tall man.	acc

(2) (The teacher is asking closed-type questions about the words in a poem. The aim is to negotiate an understanding of the term paradox. See appendix 1 for the extended sequence of IRF interactions.)

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Shimmering surely applies to which of our senses? NV Yes.	el nom	(NV:various hands) Eyes.	bid rep	Eyes. Right.	acc

(3) (Pupils have prepared several dialogues. Pupil 1 (P1) plays the role of Peter Jacobs, an employee of Mr Pieterse, who is played by pupil 2 (P2). Pupils have to produce utter-utter sequences. Abbreviations: m = marker; ms = metastatement; dir = directive; rep = reply; nom = nomination; acc = accept)

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Right Now ... good. Your instruction is to practise this dialogue with a friend and then to put together three more dialogues in which Peter Jacobs first succeeds and then does not succeed in making a definite appointment with Mr Pieterse. Good.Choose a friend and then you start practising.	m ms el el el el el	(Pupils are practising)	rep		
eliciting	Right Let's hear how it goes with three of these dialogues.Let's hear what these guys have done. Let's hear what it sounds like. Pay attention.	m el nom dir dir	P1:Mr Pieterse, I want to talk to you about my salary right now. P2:[Mutters:Oh! It's old Jacobs again.] Yes,but I don't have much time. I'm very busy at the moment. P1:[Mutters:The egghead! I know that he isn't busy.] You must postpone. I'm very serious. P2:[Mutters: Oh dear! I can't get away from him.] Yes,sure. Come to my office right now.	rep	Good. That's it.	acc

When these IRF exchanges are compared, they are similar yet different. In exchanges (1) and (2) the IRF pattern emerges from one turn to the next with the teacher taking every second turn, while in (3) the IRF pattern spans six turns of which the pupils take four. Exchanges (1) and (2) are founded on a local-allocational preselection system of turn-taking in which the teacher as the dominant participant self-selects and/or selects next speaker. It would seem that the recursive rule system proposed by McHoul (1978, p. 188) can adequately deal with such teacher-dominated accuracy-based data. However, in exchange (3) current speaker, the teacher, **selects a configuration of next speakers** for what turns out to be four utterances that constitute an answering move. The teacher not only directs speakership, but employs a global-allocational preselection system of turn-taking in his initiation which allows us to predict how turns are going to be taken by the learners. The teacher specifies the learners' interactional space, their roles, and the pattern of interactional exchange. The teacher sets up a learner response which consists of several learner-learner exchanges. Within this global design, learners are required to produce what Hoey (1991, p. 68) refers to as free pairs, or from a turn-allocation point of view, are required to engage in a learning experience which appears to simulate the local-allocational system for turn-taking in ordinary conversation (Cf. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974).

The teacher initiations in (1), (2) and (3) may be interpreted along the same lines. The aspect of similarity is that these teacher moves are initiations. While (1) and (2) are similar, they differ from (3) because in the former the teacher restricts learner initiative to their giving a minimal response. However, in the latter initiation the teacher maximises learner initiative because learners are expected to cope with an interactional pattern which has been prespecified by the teacher. We could argue that in (1) and (2) the teacher engages in **an initiative-minimising initiation**, while in (3) the teacher embarks upon **an initiative-maximising initiation**. In both cases the teacher exerts control over the discourse process. Paradoxically, it appears that the teacher may structure learner freedom to take initiative in the classroom. Indeed, the teacher seems to be ***a designer of speech exchange systems that may promote language development in the learner***. Put in the words of Stevick (1980):

> As far as I can see, "control" by the teacher is legitimate even in "progressive," or in "humanistic" education. ... Seen in this way, "initiative" and "control" are not merely two directions along a single dimension. That is to say, "control" on the part of the teacher does not interfere with "initiative" on the part of the student: when the teacher tightens her "control" of what is going on, she need not cut into the student's "initiative"; often, in fact, she will actually increase it (Stevick, 1980, p. 17 and p. 19).

Later Stevick (1980, p. 20) reiterates this view:

> In exercising "control," then, the teacher is giving some kind of order, or structure, to the learning space of the student. In encouraging him to take "initiative," she is allowing him to work, and to grow, within that space.

Similarly, we may argue that in (1) and (2) we encounter **single-utterance learner responses**, while in (3) we find **multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges functioning as a response.** In addition, (1) and (2) contain **form feedback** in which the teacher judges

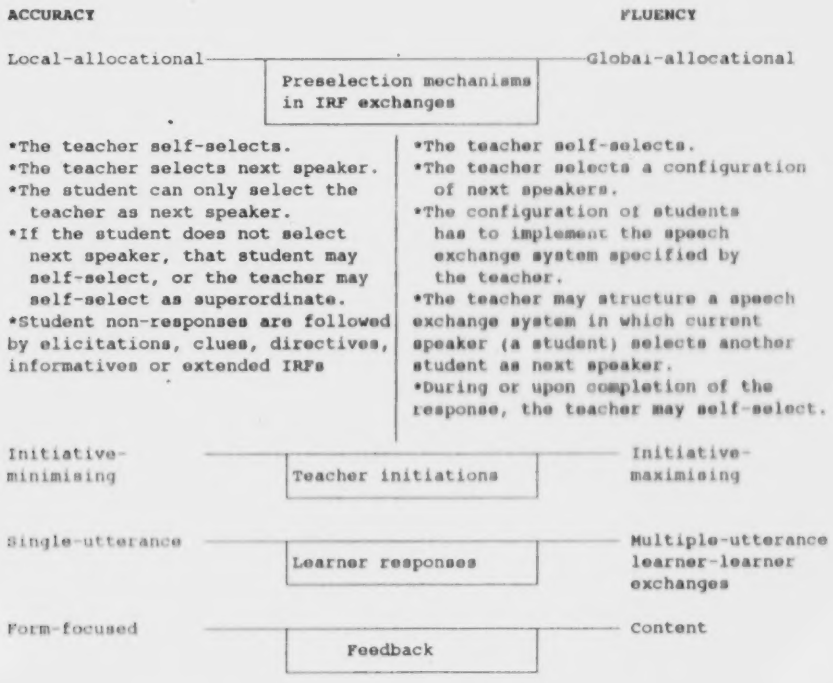
the accuracy of the learner responses, while in (3) the teacher provides **content feedback** in which he comments briefly on the effectiveness of the learners' communication in response to his initiation.

In sum, we may argue that accuracy-based data in this study are characterised by a local-allocational preselection system for turn-taking, initiative-minimising teacher initiations, single-utterance learner responses, and form-focused feedback. Clearly the teacher exerts very tight control over turn-taking and turn content. Indeed, when the teacher encounters a non-response to a teacher initiation, he/she may embark upon a re-elicitation, informative, directive, clue or extended sequence of interactions to circumvent the short circuit in the interaction. These aspects of control are evident in the extended sequence of IRF exchanges in appendix 1.

The fluency data are characterised by global-allocational preselection mechanisms for turn-taking, initiative-maximising teacher initiations, answering moves that consist of multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges, and content feedback in which the teacher evaluates the effectiveness of learner-learner communication in producing an appropriate response to his initiation.

These observations may be summarised in the following construct network:

(4)


ACCURACY
FLUENCY
Local-allocational
Global-allocational
Preselection mechanisms in IRF exchanges
•The teacher self-selects.
•The teacher selects next speaker.
•The student can only select the teacher as next speaker.
•If the student does not select next speaker, that student may self-select, or the teacher may self-select as superordinate.
•Student non-responses are followed by elicitations, clues, directives, informatives or extended IRFs
•The teacher self-selects.
•The teacher selects a configuration of next speakers.
•The configuration of students has to implement the speech exchange system specified by the teacher.
•The teacher may structure a speech exchange system in which current speaker (a student) selects another student as next speaker.
•During or upon completion of the response, the teacher may self-select.
Initiative-minimising
Teacher initiations
Initiative-maximising
Single-utterance
Learner responses
Multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges
Form-focused
Feedback
Content

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RULES FOR FLUENCY-BASED CLASSROOM TALK

From a conversation analysis perspective, the rule system proposed by McHoul (1978) may be supplemented by additional rules. In the subsequent paragraphs, the relevant rules from McHoul are listed with additions to accommodate the normative orientations encapsulated in the fluency-based data:

(5) (I) For any teacher's turn, at the initial transition-relevance place of an initial turn-constructional unit:

> (A) If the teacher's turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then the right and obligation to speak is given to a single student; no others have such a right or obligation and transfer occurs at that transition-relevance place (McHoul, 1978, p. 188).

The problem with this rule is that it does not account for the teacher selecting a configuration of learners who have to perform a communicative task in a prespecified interactional space. For this reason, the rule has to be supplemented by at least the following rule:

(6) Rule 1 (a) fluency: If the superordinate selects a configuration of next speakers, the so-selected configuration has to implement the preselected turn-taking system within the interactional space specified.

McHoul (1978) also refers to the normative mechanisms governing the taking of turns subsequent to a student turn:

(7) (II) If I(A) is effected, for any student-so-selected's turn, at the initial transition-relevance place of an initial turn-constructional unit:

> (A) If the student-so-selected's turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then the right and obligation to speak is given to the teacher; no others have such a right or obligation and transfer occurs at the transition-relevance place (McHoul, 1978, p. 188).

This rule implies that the student can only select the teacher as next speaker. The fluency data in excerpt (3) contradict this rule because current speaker (student in the role of Jacobs) selects next speaker (a pupil in the role of Mr Pieterse). The rule proposed by McHoul (1978, p. 188) has to accommodate the notion that the teacher may direct speakership, and specify the pattern of participation for learners in a subsequent interactional exchange:

(8) Rule 1 (b) fluency: If the so-selected subordinates engage in the preselected turn-taking system within the interactional space specified, the subordinates will select next speaker in accordance with the superordinate's preselected and prespecified speech exchange system.

In addition, a rule would have to be included to account for switching from one mode of language teaching to the other. This would probably require a rule of the following kind:

(9) Rule 1 (c) transition from fluency to accuracy modes: If the superordinate self-selects upon the completion of a response produced by a configuration of learners, he/she may, but does not have to, re-activate rules 1 (a) and 1 (b) above, or use the rule system proposed by McHoul (1978) as normative orientation to change the mode of language teaching.

It is clear that these 'rules' derive from the teacher's design of speech exchange systems: the teacher is able to specify different configurations of next speakers and determine the rules governing such speech exchange systems.

MAKING AND TESTING IF-THEN PREDICTIONS

Kelly (1955, pp. 122-127) claims that construct networks are used to make predictions about experiences; so, if this construct network is consistent with our experiences of specific modes of language teaching, then we should be able to make predictions about the discourse in those contexts of learning. Kelly (1955, pp. 122-127) proposes the if-then format for generating predictions. The if-clause contains reference to a set of conditions, while the then-clause specifies the behaviour or experience that may occur. Such prediction systems are found in communication rules research (Shimanoff, 1980), conversation analysis (Sacks et al., 1974), learner strategies research (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), and computer programming (Riley, 1987). However, human action is not wholly predictable; indeed, when experiences contradict our predictions we may have to generate new predictions, re-interpret the experience, and/or modify our constructs.

What kind of predictions may teachers generate in terms of the construct network outlined above? The following sets of predictions may be formulated:

(10.1) If the teacher engages in accuracy-based teaching, **then**

(10.1.1) the teacher exerts control over turn content and the floor through a **local-allocational preselection system of turn-taking**,

(10.1.2) the teacher embarks upon initiative-minimising teacher initiations,

(10.1.3) learners produce single-utterance responses, and

(10.1.4) learner non-responses are followed by one or more teacher clues, directives, re-elicitations, informatives, and/or extended IRF sequences, and

(10.1.5) the teacher embarks upon form feedback in which he/she comments on the accuracy of learner responses.

(10.2) If the teacher engages in fluency-based teaching, **then**

(10.2.1) the teacher structures learner freedom by means of a **global-allocational preselection system of turn-taking**,

(10.2.2) the teacher embarks upon initiative-maximising teacher initiations,

(10.2.3) learners engage in multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges which function as responses to the teacher initiations,

(10.2.4) the teacher's role in case of learner difficulties in dealing with a communication task is to facilitate the learners' construction of effective messages within a preselection system which is globally managed (i.e., with multiple learner-learner exchanges preselected by the teacher), and

(10.2.5) the teacher embarks upon content feedback in which he/she comments on the effectiveness of learner exchanges as goal-directed discourse.

Given these sets of predictions, we employed theoretical sampling in eliciting data to confirm or invalidate these hypotheses. It was argued that if these predictions were true, we would be able to elicit discourse evidence to confirm them. The following activities were categorised as accuracy- and fluency-based: the first emphasises the metacommunicative focus and control exerted by the teacher in the accuracy mode, while the second seems to fall within the realm of fluency work:

(11) **Step 1**: Deal with the following tense: The Simple Past Tense, which is used to refer to events that were completed in the past.

Last week I went to Kimberley.
In 1948 two veterans completed the race.
The men walked all the way to town.
The girl sang a song.

(12) **Picture-stimuli - Story-telling**

Level:	Intermediate, advanced
Purpose:	Practising narrative skill Producing coherent spoken and written texts Focusing on learner-learner interaction
Materials:	Pictorial cards (at least ten per pair)
Procedure:	Learners are asked to pair off. They are handed their cards. The cards have to be put down so that the pictures face down. Learner 1 picks up a picture card and tells a story based on the picture. Learner 2 picks up the next picture, continues with the story told by learner 1, and has to link the story to the second picture. They take turns until all the cards have

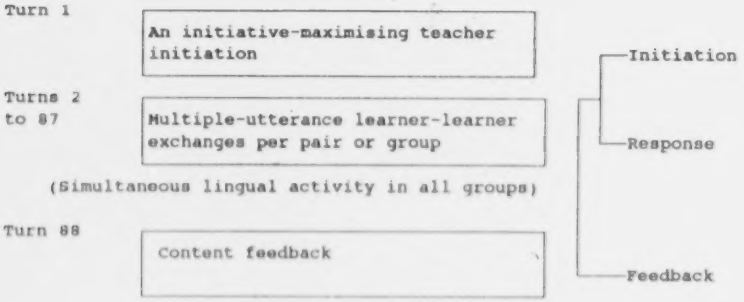
been used up. Learner 2 ends off the story. After the oral phase learners have to write out a coherent text based on the pictures.

In appendices 2 and 3 classroom discourse is found which was collected with a view to confirming the if-then predictions emanating from the construct system.

In appendix 2, the predictions for accuracy-based data are confirmed. The teacher embarks upon a local-allocational preselection system in which the IRF pattern evolves from one turn to the next. The teacher selects next speaker, and upon the completion of the student turn, next turn reverts to the teacher. It is clear that the teacher embarks upon initiative-minimising initiations, while learners produce single-utterance responses. The teacher then provides form feedback.

Similarly, in appendix 3 the predictions for fluency-based data are confirmed. Diagrammatically the global design of the IRF exchange in the data may be represented as follows:

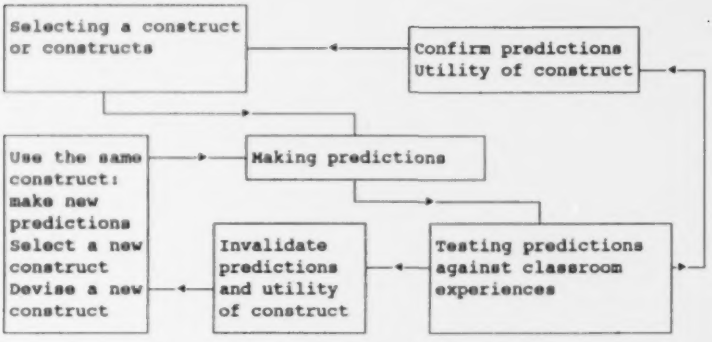
(13)



INVALIDATING CONSTRUCTS AND DIVERSIFYING CONSTRUCT SYSTEMS

Confirming one's predictions is only half the story; what happens if one's classroom experiences contradict one's predictions? Several possibilities exist, according to construct psychologist George Kelly. First, one may reinterpret, perhaps distort, the experience so that one's construct network and predictions are confirmed. Second, one may decide to abandon one's predictions, and generate new predictions. Third, one may create a new set of constructs, and proceed to test their predictive efficiency. The following diagram explains the process of testing predictions:

(14)


Selecting a construct or constructs
Confirm predictions Utility of construct
Use the same construct: make new predictions Select a new construct Devise a new construct
Making predictions
Invalidate predictions and utility of construct
Testing predictions against classroom experiences

To create intersubjective or shared meanings, the discourse evidence and the construct systems we use for prediction purposes have to be made explicit. Because human actions - including those in the classroom - cannot be cast in a strait-jacket, it seems reasonable to presume that the dynamic interface between experience and the normative dimensions of classroom discourse precludes our defining **the final rule or construct system** for participation in the classroom. However, permeable and changeable constructs will allow us to see different dimensions of classroom discourse, and to interpret/reinterpret the discourse evidence.

CONCLUSION

If teachers are supposed to make informed decisions in the classroom, then it seems that a discourse-based construct system, which may yield testable predictions about the interactive phase of lessons, may be useful in promoting teacher awareness of what they are doing. Teacher decision-making and empowerment are at the heart of the prediction system outlined in this paper. The teacher is able to direct speakership and design speech exchange systems consistent with his/her views of language teaching and learning. And teachers should be aware of their choices, and teacher-training should, as Bowers (1987) has suggested, promote teachers' perceptions of classroom processes; otherwise, as Stubbs (1986, p. 6) has claimed, teachers may become victims of unprincipled imitation.

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language. The corpuses of classroom data used in this study, as well as a longer version of this paper, are lodged with the author, whose E-mail address is fgwg@engl.uovs.ac.za

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APPENDIX 1: AN EXTENDED SEQUENCE OF INTERACTIONS

In this excerpt the teacher and his pupils negotiate an understanding of the term paradox.

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Isn't there something else? Did you find anything else?	el el	(dispreferred non-response)			
eliciting	Let me ask the the question this way:Oosty, what does 'shimmering' mean? That's unfair, isn't it? He didn't even work on the poem and I am asking him a question. What does shimmering mean?	nom el el	(dispreferred non-response)			
eliciting	Somebody, give me an example of where you have seen something shimmer?	el	Sun on water.	rep	Sun on water.	acc
eliciting	Another example.	el	Is it like shake?	rep	Is it like shake?	ev
eliciting	Is it like milkshake?	el	No, vibrating.	rep	Vibrating. Yes, perhaps you could use it that way.	ev
eliciting	But we had sun on water. Can you give me another example? Anybody. I'm driving through the Karoo on a hot day.	inf el cl	(Students offer responses) Mirage ... the mirage.	bid	That kind of shimmering that you see in the distance, which is a mirage,and which, in a way, makes you think,you know, that the road disappears into water.	ev

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting			When you are having a braai - above the braai.	rep	Yes, there's an ideal example. The heat waves that you get above the fire of a braai - you can see the heat waves shimmering.	ev
eliciting	But, hang on, Warren. What is she (the poet) talking about?	el	The swallows.	rep	Come on.	ev
eliciting	We have just been discussing shimmering. Shimmering surely applies to which of our senses?	inf el	Eyes.	rep	Eyes. Right.	acc
eliciting	So now you can see a sound. You switch on the radio and say,'Look at that great hit!' Is the poet going moggy or are we?	inf inf el	Both	rep	Both.	acc
informing	Reed totally disagrees.	inf	(laughter)	rep		
informing	It's really tough to convince him that poetry is -psh- something else and for normal people.	inf	(laughter)	rep		

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Come on.What is that shimmering sound? What would we call it?	el el	(dispreferred non-response)			
informing	Maybe you are going to learn a new word there. Ever heard of paradox?	inf el	No. (Muffled responses)	rep	Some people think they might have. We haven't used the word before.	ev
eliciting	Somebody try and spell it.	el				
eliciting			Para...?	el		
informing	Paradox.	el	Paradox.	rep	Paradox.	acc
eliciting	Go, Gary.	el	P-a-r-r/	rep	Uhm-hu (No)	ev
eliciting			P-a-r-a-d-o-x	rep	Right.	acc
eliciting	What's a paradox? You gentle-man with the dictionaries, what's a paradox? Yes.	el nom el nom	(NV activity as they look up the word)(Hands go up). Something opposite-saying something opposite.	bid rep	You're on the right track; you are just struggling to express it there.	ev
eliciting	Well, let's see what the dictionary says. Somebody got it? Yeah. Johny. (Bell rings) It's break already.	el nom inf	A statement which seems absurd or self-contradictory, but may be true.	rep	Alright. A statement which seems absurd or self-contradictory; in other words, contradicting itself, but which may be true.	ev

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Now does this seem absurd: "shimmering sound"?	el	No.(solitary bid)			
eliciting	Does this seem absurd at first sight?	el	Yes. (Various bids)	rep	Yes, it does.	acc
eliciting	OK. It seems absurd, but can it be true? A shimmering sound - what kind of cry do swallows make?	inf el el	(Dispreferred response)			
eliciting	Come, you nature boys.	el	A very high pitch.	rep	A very high-pitched trill.	ev
eliciting	And what is a trill?	el	(Dispreferred non-response)			
eliciting	A sound that almost ...?	el	shakes	rep	vibrates. A sound that almost vibrates	ev
eliciting	And what is the major feature of a shimmering image?	el	It vibrates.	rep	It seems to vibrate.	acc

Upon the occurrence of dispreferred or non-responses by pupils, the teacher may **re-initiate** and **provide clues** in facilitating student responses. Alternatively, the teacher may overcome short-circuits by using an **informative act.** However, the teacher may embark upon what Mehan (1985, p. 122) and White and Lightbown (1984, p. 235) refer to as an **extended sequence of interactions** in negotiating common ground:

> ... if the response is not immediate or if it is incomplete or incorrect, the teacher begins to work at getting it (the preferred response) through a series of repetitions and rephrasings. What may result is an extended sequence of interactions during which the student does not really answer the teacher's questions, but rather together, the teacher and the student create the student's answer. This is only possible, of course, if the teacher knows what answer he/she is creating... (White and Lightbown, 1984, p. 235)

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APPENDIX 2: ACCURACY-BASED DATA

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
Boundary	So, firstly, then, we are going to look at the Simple Past Tense.	m ms				
Informing	On the board I have four sentences. I would like you to take a look at these sentences. The first one is 'Last week I went to Kimberley'; the second, 'In 1948 two veterans completed the race'; the third, 'The men walked all the way to town'; and the fourth, 'The girls sang a song'.	inf dir inf inf inf inf				
Eliciting	Now, I would like you to identify the verbs in those sentences. (5.2 seconds wait-time) Yes.	m el nom	'Went' in the first one.	rep	In the first one, the verb is 'went'.	acc
Eliciting	In the second? (4.2 seconds wait-time) Yes.	el nom	'Completed'	rep	'Completed'	acc
Eliciting	In the third? (2.33 seconds wait-time) Yes.	el nom	'Walked'	rep	'Walked'	acc

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
Eliciting	And in the fourth?	el	Sang.	rep	Sang. Fine.	acc
Eliciting	I would like you to take a look at these verbs ... so these are the verbs. (NV T points at the verbs). Would you agree that these are past tense verbs? verbs).	dir inf el nom	Yes.	rep	Yes.	
Eliciting	Why? Is there a clue in the first sentence to suggest that a past tense verb should be used? (3.2 sec wait-time). Yes	el el nom	'Last week'	rep	The words 'last week' suggest to us that we should expect the past tense to be used.	acc

Note: The single-turn IRF exchange is the predominant pattern in this lesson. For this reason, only turns 1 to 14 are quoted.

APPENDIX 3:
FLUENCY-BASED DATA - DESIGNING A SPEECH EXCHANGE SYSTEM

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
	TURN 1		TURNS 2 TO 87		TURN 88	

Turn **Turn-by-turn transcription**

Teacher initiation
Boundary in discourse
Opening moves

1 T: Right
Class, today we are going to do uhm we're going to have a story-telling session, and we are going to use cards in the story-telling session. So what I expect you to do is I would like you to work in groups or in pairs uhm and then you have to do the following. I'm going to give you some cards (NV Teacher takes out several picture cards from the middle of the pack). I'll take them out over here and I'm going to put them down like this (NV Teacher packs cards on table with pictures facing down)... in other words, the actual picture is going to be is going to have to face down. Now, I don't know what this picture is. So what you do is, you pick up the first picture, and you tell a story based on this on the picture and student 1 will then begin the story and will a tell a story focusing on this particular picture. The picture here is of a young lady in jeans, long hair ... and now I'm student 1 ... 'It's a little thing that happened the other day. When I got up at about six o' clock in the morning, I had to go outside because I noticed that someone was sitting on the lawn. I went to her, took a good look at her, and I knew that something was amiss. She wouldn't say a word. I walked around her, once, and then I noticed ... I noticed that on her left ear there was some kind of redness. (Laughter from students) And I knew that something was wrong.' Now, learner 2 has to extend the story, and has to link it to the next picture. And this is a picture ... well, it's a picture of a painting. 'And I should've known that she was an artist (Laughter from students) because the redness on the ear was paint... and I knew that there was I had to do something for her (laughter) because the redness on the ear distracted passers-by and there was a car crash...my neighbour took a look at this ear and he was so perplexed that he crashed into the concrete wall uhm alongside his driveway.' And now student 3 has to continue with the story, and has to link the story has to extend the story and link it to the next picture. 'But, of course, the women in the street were not pleased about her presence ...' Okay, you've got the idea? (Muffled yes responses). In other words, what I want you to do is in your groups and in your pairs I would like you to take a pack of cards, and I would like you to tell

a story along these lines, and I'll come and listen to you and uhm I will probably ask some of you to respond right at the end. (NV Teacher hands out cards). Once you've got your cards you may start.

Learner response to the teacher initiation

2 S1: Kan ek maar uitdeel? (NV student hands out cards).
3 S2: Moenie kroek nie.
4 S3: Moet een maar begin en dan gaan ons aan en aan.
5 S2: Goed, begin.
6 S1: Maar onthou jy mag nie na die kaartjie kyk nie.
7 S2: I suppose we have to speak English.
8 S1: I think so too.
9 S2: OK, maybe you should start.
10 S3: Aren't we supposed to put them all down on the table?
11 S2: Are we supposed to look at them only when we start the next turn?
12 T: Yes.
13 S2: Heidi, will you start?
14 S1: Uh (NV she looks at a picture of a woman with long hair). This is the woman with the longest hair in the world, and she decided that uhm she decided that she was a little girl that she was never going to cut her hair but at this stage her hair got so long that it was hanging on the ground and she cannot get her hair to be combed out, so she cannot look anybody in the eye she walks straight up with her nose in the air all the time/
15 S2: (NV picks up next picture) And this poor women, because she cannot turn her head or let it come down forward, she cannot look in the mirror. And once she won a whole batch of make-up a whole kit because she entered a competition for beautiful hair, but now she won all this make-up and she can't use it because she can't bring her head down to see her nails to put on cutex or look in the mirror to put on eye-shadow or lipstick... so I think it is quite tragic about this woman/
16 S3: (NV picks up next card: picture of a frog). This woman actually wanted to be and actress and she portrayed the role of Rapunzel. Do you know that story about the woman with the very long hair? But unfortunately, when she acted in this play, because she couldn't wear any make-up and she couldn't look her lover in the eye, he couldn't fall in love with her.
17 Ss: (Laughter)
18 S3: And because he couldn't fall in love with her, she couldn't kiss him, so the frog couldn't turn into a prince. And so the love story turned into a tragedy and the poor woman is very very depressed, and now she lives all alone in this house. And then these two people they look after her and uhm this little car come past every day and it takes her for a drive and then she looks for that lover of her because she is looking for her to kiss him but she can't kiss him because she can't look down.
19 Ss: (laughter)
20 S1: She's really got a problem.
21 S3: Yes, she is. Yeah, she's looking for her lover, her friend. She's alone/

22 S2: Yeah (NV picks up the next card) Uh/
23 S1: She's found him.
24 S2: Ohhh and the woman as she was driving in that little car you mentioned, running around kissing frogs/
25 Ss: (laughter)
26 S2: to turn one into a prince, she ended up on a bench, and she decided/
27 S3: On the beach?
28 S2: Uh yes, on the beach, and it was a lovely sunset, clouds of pink, and she decided that is going to go for a walk, and uhm there she was right into the water/
29 S3: Shame/
30 S1: (NV picks up the next card) And because she has such long hair, she didn't drown, she actually floated on top of the water/
31 Ss: (laughter)
32 S1: Like a coconut, you know that is the reason why coconuts can float on the water because it has got a hairy surface/
33 S3: Oh like hair?
34 Ss: (Laughter)
35 S1: And that is why they the coconuts land on islands and they can grow into coconut trees, so this poor woman uhm floating on the sea actually landed up in Greece/
36 S2: Ohh/
37 S1: where she met an old man who had a donkey and on the donkey there was baskets tied with rope and this baskets he carried flowers and fruit and wine and everything that he should take to the village to sell to the people, and actually this woman starting up in London with her long hair ended up in Greece/
38 S3: (NV picks up the next card) Ohh and then when she was in Greece then she met this adorable man he was hiding in the middle basket on the donkey/
39 Ss: (laughter)
40 S3: but he was actually a genie, at least we think he was a genie/
41 Ss: (laughter)
42 S3: and then he had this magic potion, and then he kissed her, she didn't have to kiss him, and then her hair got all curly and lovely and wonderful/
43 Ss: (laughter)
44 S3: And when her hair was all curly and wonderful and lovely, she went to Venice, and there in Venice, they were riding on those little boats ... do you know what you call them?/
45 S1: Gondola/
46 S3: a gondola, yes they were riding on that, and then she was about to meet the phantom of the opera/
47 Ss: (laughter, and an unintelligible comment)
48 S2: (NV picks up next picture). As she met the phantom he decided to show her a movie, but unfortunately this is a very very horrible phantom, this is not the real actually nice phantom of the opera, she met the wrong phantom, and uh he showed her movies her movies in his chambers down below the opera house, and he showed her a movie/

49 S1: (NV picks up next picture) of a mudslide/
50 S2: of a mudslide (unintelligible) and this woman decided that she cannot stand this any longer and that she has to go home because faint faint feeling that something is going to happen/
51 S1: (NV picks up next card) And because she wanted to escape from this phantom, she ran out of his chambers and she just ran down the street, and then suddenly she found herself in the circus, and in this circus she saw something that she has never seen in her life, something from England and landing up in Greece and Venice, she has never in her life seen an elephant/
52 Ss: Ohhh/
53 S1: and she was so excited about this elephant and all the things that it could do that she decided that she was going to look for the elephant in wild-life, and then she heard that the elephant lived in Africa, and she decided that she was going to Africa/
54 S3: (NV picks up the next card) To get to Africa she got onto this big boat with the army boys, and with her curly hair she began to sing like Lily Marlene/
55 Ss: (laughter)
56 S3: and she became very famous and very popular and on this army boat she met this Arabian sheikh/
57 Ss: uhm/
58 S3: yeah, she met him and as they got to Africa this man was there and then he seduced her/
59 Ss: oeh/
60 S3: he seduced her/
61 S2: Good grief man/
62 Ss: (laughter)
63 S2: Was he in the army?
64 Ss: (laughter)
65 S2: (NV picks up the next card) Like you said she was on the army ship and the sheikh's (unintelligible) so one of the sailors was actually in love with her as well, and once he heard about the seduction he jumped into this thing - I don't know what you call it/
66 Ss: A tank/
67 S2: No/
68 Ss: A tank/
69 S2: A tank, yes/
70 Ss: (laughter) and he decided to go to her rescue to rescue her/
71 Ss: Wow/
72 S1: (NV picks up the next card) Ohh ... that night as they were sleeping he crawled into her chambers and he grabbed her and then they eloped on bicycles/
73 Ss: (laughter)
74 S1: and no one knew where they were because they got onto bicycles and they rode off into the sunset to an unknown destination/
75 S3: (NV picks up the next card) And that unknown destination wasn't so unknown, they rode all the way to the Lost City in South Africa/
76 Ss: (laughter)
77 S3: and there in the Lost City he was so romantic he leaves her a diamond ring her

engagement ring he leaves it between all the money and stuff, and then they were playing this game and just as she was about to throw the dice she picked up this dice and then when she opened her purse - diamond ring!

78 S2: (NV picks up the next card) But unfortunately the excitement/

79 Ss: (raucous laughter)

80 S2: became too much for her lover and he got tied down in a strait-jacket ... he got totally totally mad because her perm went out and he saw how long her hair actually is/

81 Ss: (laughter)

82 S2: and he just couldn't take it and he went totally mad and they had to drag him away by his feet in a strait-jacket

83 S1: (NV picks up the next card) That caused the poor woman to also go out of her mind because she was seduced and abducted and everything that happened to her, she went into a frenzy and she actually caused/

84 S2: a whirlwind/

85 S1: oh yes and now uh/

86 S3: a cyclone/ a cyclone

87 S1: to come onto the people who did her so much wrong and she wanted to get them back, and she had this magic power that she didn't even know about and nobody knew, and when she was all (unintelligible), the cyclone came over the people/

Teacher content feedback.
Evaluate and comment

88 T: OK, let's stop it there.
Right ladies and gentleman, your attention please... your attention please, you have now ... that was good uhm I think it is difficult to bridge the gaps in between let's say what one person has said and what you want to say; in other words, there is a gap and you have to bridge the gap, you have to extend the story, you have to link it to the next uhm picture. In other words, you actually created a coherent story and of course while you sat there you nodded there was laughter there were on-line signals indicating that a message was being conveyed and not only conveyed you actually decoded the message.
Now I want to go into the next phase of this session....

APPENDIX 4:
THE TEACHER AS CO-COMMUNICATOR OR FACILITATOR OF COMMUNICATION

In the next excerpt it is shown that the teacher initiation is followed by student-teacher interaction in which the teacher suspends the feedback move, and communicates as if he is a student:

Initiative-maximising teacher initiation
Opening move
Teacher selects a configuration of learners

Teacher: Right, this morning we're going to work in pairs again. I'm going to give you three statements, and in pairs you have to state whether you agree or disagree with them. You also have to give reasons for your point of view. Here are the three statements. The first one is, "I think all medical treatment should be free"; the second one is, "It seems to me that the country is going to the dogs..." and the third one, "Young people today have too much freedom and too much money." (T repeats the statements.) Once you have discussed the statements, write out a paragraph on each, in which you express your point of view.

Multiple-utterance learner-teacher exchanges functioning as a response

SEQUENCE 1 - (Student-teacher interaction in which the student dominates, the teacher suspends form feedback moves, and contributes towards the discourse through encouragers and two relevant next turns in turns 15 and 17. In turn 19 the teacher reverts to the authority role.)

2	T:	Right May I interrupt? I would like you to tell me ...uhm... whether you agree or disagree with the first statement.
3	S12:	Uhm ... in some way I do disagree 'cause I think underprivileged people that ... like pensioners and things like that, should get medical treatment free. I take our laboratory, for instance, ...uhm... the doctors there get their treatment free, but the pensioners and things like that, they have to pay for it. I don't think that's fair. The doctors can afford to pay/
4	T:	Uhm-hu.
5	S12:	R100 for a test, but the pensioners who get a R100 a month, they must pay. I don't think that's fair/
6	T:	Uhm-hu.
7	S12:	and medicine too, it's extremely expensive to give antibiotics and things like that and I think it's unfair that underprivileged people should pay that much/
8	T:	Uhm-hu.

9	S12:	but medical schemes do/
10	T:	Yes. Do they pay out?
11	S12:	Yeah, they do pay out.
12	T:	Uhm-hu. Yes. Fortunately.
13	T+S:	(laughter)
14	S12:	Fortunately.
15	T:	I tell you if I didn't have a medical aid I would have had financial problems long ago.
16	S12:	Yes, you see.
17	T:	I would have had cash flow problems.
18	T+S:	(laughter)
19	T:	Okay, you have to put those ideas into written form now, I have to listen to the others too.

(After several interviews, the teacher goes onto the next phase of the lesson.)

Feedback and re-initiation

Teacher: Right, class. I listened to all the pairs, and you expressed very interesting ideas. Let us list some of the ideas you mentioned, before I give you the writing task.

WHERE DOES SOCIOPRAGMATIC AMBIGUITY COME FROM?

Susan Meredith Burt

Sociopragmatic ambiguity (SPA) is claimed here to differ from other, better known types of ambiguity, in terms of its locus, cause, and effect. SPA is characteristic of whole-discourse features rather than of lexical items or phrases. The ambiguity is one of social rather than ideational or semantic meaning. The paper will claim that SPA arises via an identifiable interaction between two maxims, which I will call confluence, in which two maxims each enjoin the same speaker behavior. Two examples will be discussed: 1) the choice of language in a situation where more than one is available is a case where each choice has two potential social messages, and 2) the choice between address pronouns (such as *tu/vous*) is similarly sociopragmatically ambiguous because of maxim confluence.

INTRODUCTION: TYPES OF AMBIGUITIES AND THEIR ETIOLOGIES

Because ambiguous sentences can reveal important characteristics of lexical items and syntactic constructions, introductory linguistics texts teach students to distinguish between different types of ambiguities, and to understand the different explanations for them. Most linguists are familiar with examples like:

(1) Chris and Kim met by the bank.

which is ambiguous because of the homonyms *bank* (of a river) and *bank* (financial institution). There is a difference between such cases of *lexical ambiguity* and cases of *structural ambiguity*, ambiguity that arises because a sentence or constituent can be parsed in more than one way. A classic example of the latter is:

(2) The book was about old men and women.

where the scope of *old* may or may not include *women*, and the sentence is therefore ambiguous.

Recently, researchers such as Horn (1985) and Sweetser (1990) have investigated a third kind of ambiguity, *pragmatic ambiguity*, which is characteristic of grammatical functors such as the negative particle or modal auxiliaries. Horn (1985) defines pragmatic ambiguity as "a built-in duality of use" (p. 122), and shows, for example, that *not* can be used both for ordinary negation, as in (3a) and for metalinguistic negation as in (3b):

(3) a. I didn't manage to solve the problem--and I failed the exam.
b. I didn't *manage* to solve the problem--it was easy!

where the speaker of (3b) negates not the content of the proposition, but the lexical choice of the putative earlier utterance.

In contrast with these types of ambiguity, in which specific structures or lexical items are the source of the ambiguity, this paper will concentrate on defining and explaining the cause of a fourth type of ambiguity, *sociopragmatic ambiguity*. Sociopragmatic ambiguity (or SPA) does not result from choosing certain lexical items or structures, but inheres in global discourse choices such as choice of a code or choice of an address pronoun (or title). Furthermore, the ambiguity is not between ideational meanings as is the case with lexical, structural or pragmatic ambiguity, but between different possible social intentions on the part of the speaker. However, like pragmatic ambiguity, sociopragmatic ambiguity can be characterized as arising because a certain choice between possible forms (to use a word like *manage*, as in the case of pragmatic ambiguity above, or to use one language rather than another) has the potential for a duality of use. More important, from the hearer's point of view, an utterance characterized by sociopragmatic ambiguity has the potential for a duality of interpretation. One example of sociopragmatic ambiguity, that of code choice in intercultural conversations, will be discussed in the following section. After giving evidence that the act of choosing a code can be sociopragmatically ambiguous, I will show that sociopragmatic ambiguity comes about because of a new relationship between pragmatic maxims--not a violation, flout, clash or opting out--but what I call a *confluence* of maxims: more than one maxim can enjoin the speaker to make a certain linguistic choice. When it is not obvious to the hearer which maxim lies behind that choice, sociopragmatic ambiguity results. Then, to show that this example is not a unique case, the third section of the paper will discuss second person pronoun choice, a well-known example of SPA that I will show can also be explained as arising through maxim confluence. The reanalysis of the familiar *tu-vous* choice problem shows how Scotton's (1983) expansion of Gricean theory has increased the explanatory power of that pragmatic framework.

THE SOCIOPRAGMATIC AMBIGUITY OF CODE CHOICE

Sociopragmatic ambiguity can occur in an intercultural situation when two people meet, each a learner of the other's native language. In this situation, it is not immediately obvious which language a speaker should choose because any choice will be sociopragmatically ambiguous. Let us look at examples, first imaginary, and then real, that show this.

Imagine that a native speaker of German, who is learning English, encounters a native speaker of English who speaks some German. When they meet for the first time, the English speaker may decide to speak German to the German speaker, who is likely to react in one of two ways: she may think,

(4) "How wonderful! An American who speaks German and is willing to do so!"

(this, of course, is what the English speaker hopes she will think). But equally possible is that she will think,

(5) "That arrogant woman! Does she think my English is not good enough for a conversation with her?"

As I will show, there is good pragmatic justification for either of these reactions. Suppose, on the other hand, the English speaker (E) decides to speak English to the German speaker (G). Again, G may react in either of two ways:

(6) "How wonderful! A real native speaker is speaking English to me!"

or G might react,

(7) "Typical American! She expects everybody to speak English! Probably doesn't know a word of German besides *Gesundheit*.. "

Again, there is pragmatic justification for either reaction.

Let me add that which strategy E would use, and which reaction G would have would depend on situational variables such as where this conversation was taking place, the possible presence of other persons, and both speakers' relative proficiencies in their second languages, as they mutually discover what these are. But I have, more than once, as a tourist in Japan, run into German tourists, and in a setting best described as linguistically irrelevant to the choice between English and German, had to make exactly this kind of decision (Burt, 1992) documents other cases of such decision-making in bilingual conversations).

That the four possible reactions to the two possible strategies do in fact occur can be documented with my own experience as a language learner and with comments from naive listeners to tape recorded conversations in which the taped speakers used the different strategies, that is, chose their first or second language (for details on the listener reactions to tapes, see Burt, 1994). If a speaker uses her interlocutor's language, she can provoke a positive reaction like (4), as in (8a), a real American listener's reaction to a taped German speaker's use of English, and as in (8b), a German listener's reaction to a taped American who uses German:

(8a) "I liked Maria, she seemed accommodating to Kay--in so far that she spoke some English to equalize the exchange.... She seemed friendly and willing to accommodate Kay by using some English. ... Maria used some English to make Kay feel better." (AMA27)[1]

(8b) "Because of her nice voice and her way of speaking I think she is a very sympath[et]ic person. My impression is that she is a very open-minded person who likes to meet new people and to learn things about other countries. She seems to be very eager to learn the language because she took the chance to speak German in the conversation with a German girl." (GFB33)[1]

Both listeners approve of the NNS trying to speak her second language.

There are also reactions of the (5) type: if someone speaks a learner's native language, this can be interpreted as an aspersion on the learner's second language ability; in (9), an American with a PhD in German reacts to the taped German speaker when she chose to use English:

(9) "After listening to her several times, I conclude that Maria is just a bit pedantic, a bit of a German know-it-all. Her English is good, but **for a German** not **that** good. Maria is not inconsiderate or unfriendly, but there is just a hint in her tone that what she hasn't heard of isn't important. Therefore she is somewhat less genuinely interested in other people. For the above reasons, I would not walk across campus just to meet Maria. I have the feeling that she adopts English in order to try to assert her superiority, while Kay (who seems much younger) displays unspoiled curiosity about people and places." (AMA46) [emphasis in the original]

However, depending on who the interlocutor/listener is, a speaker may provoke a negative reaction if she chooses her native language. In (10a), two German listeners try politely to find an explanation for an American bilingual's perhaps unexpected use of English:

(10a) "she doesn't continue speaking German...maybe that's because she hasn't enough self-confidence." (GFA27)
"although she had the chance to talk in German to Maria, Kay always got back to English and it looked like she wouldn't feel very comfortable with her German..." (GMA23)

But in (10b), an American listener harshly criticizes that same American for not speaking German.

(10b) "I felt that she was a bit rude because she didn't ask if Maria could speak English before she (Kay) started describing Urbana's location. ...Her reverting to English very early on in the conversation makes me feel that she wasn't trying very hard (& her majoring in German makes this more inexcusable)." (AMA27)

For the last category, the positive reaction from a NNS who is pleased and excited to be speaking with a real NS, I do not have examples from the listener reactions to the tapes but I do have two anecdotes from my own experiences as a language learner. The first comes from a trip to Japan. When I arrived at Osaka airport I impulsively greeted the customs official in Japanese. He proceeded to ask me in Japanese where I would be staying, for how long, for what purpose, and whether I was bringing in any tobacco products. I managed to tell him in Japanese that I was staying in Kobe, for one week, to attend a conference, and that I don't smoke. The entire interview was in Japanese, and I was very pleased.

Similarly, a few years ago, on my way back from a conference in Finland, on an early morning flight from the north of the country to Helsinki, the Finnair flight attendant offered drinks--which on Finnair flights, one must pay for. I asked:

(11) SMB: Onko teillä appelsiinimehua? (Do you have orange juice?)
Flt. att.: Viisi markkaa. (Five marks.)

I gave her five Finnmarks and got my orange juice, and was again extremely pleased with myself all the way back to Chicago.

In both cases I found it very accommodating of the native speakers to be willing to humor me. But native speakers really can't know in advance how a NNS will react. Neither strategy is failsafe, in terms of the reaction it may provoke; both strategies--choosing your own language, and choosing the interlocutor's language--can provoke either a positive or a negative interpretation and reaction, and in this sense, they are both sociopragmatically ambiguous.

The explanation for this sociopragmatic ambiguity of code choice is to be found in the Markedness Model for code choice developed in Myers-Scotton (1993a, 1993b) and Scotton (1983). Basic to this model is the Negotiation Principle (NP), analogous to the Cooperative Principle (CP) of Grice (1975). The Negotiation Principle is given in (12):

(12) Negotiation Principle: "Choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it symbolizes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between speaker and addressee for the current exchange." (Scotton, 1983, p. 116).

Thus, forms, specifically codes, are linked with sets of rights and obligations, or RO sets. The linking of codes or forms with RO sets will, of course, be specific to the speech community, but the phenomenon of some link or other is potentially universal (Scotton's framework fits well with the notion of universal vs. parochial pragmatics of Green (1990)). For example, in a multilingual society, the type for which Myers-Scotton developed this model, one language might be associated with the family, and thus index an intimate, familial set of rights and obligations between participants, while another would index relationships throughout the wider, multi-ethnic society. Certain codes are considered marked or unmarked for certain situations. For example, Myers-Scotton notes that for interethnic conversations in Kenya, Swahili is the unmarked code (Myers-Scotton, 1993a, p. 477). However, markedness is both dynamic, that is, subject to change as the situation changes, and gradient, in that "one code choice (or sometimes more) is more unmarked than others for a given RO set." (Myers-Scotton, 1993a, p. 477).

Speakers may choose to try to change the type of interaction by changing the RO set by switching codes. For example, Myers-Scotton tells of a storekeeper who speaks to his sister in the lingua franca of the area, Swahili, after she has come into his store, even though she attempts to use their home language, Lwidakho, to define the situation as a family rather than commercial one--and thus, to get some free groceries. In other words, he changes the operative RO set by changing codes (Myers-Scotton, 1993b, pp. 144-145).

Within this general framework, Gricean-style maxims mediate the choice of codes. For example, the maxim that allows for the changing of codes in the grocery store situation is the Marked Choice Maxim, given in (13):

(13) Make a marked code choice which is not the unmarked index of the unmarked RO set in an interaction when you wish to establish a new RO set as unmarked for the current exchange. (Myers-Scotton, 1993b, p. 131)

It can be seen that this is what the storekeeper did--he changed from the familial code to the pan-ethnic, commercial code, and thus changed the operative RO set. Myers-Scotton has proposed a number of submaxims of code choice, but we will make use of two given in (14):

(14) *The Deference Maxim*: Show deference in your code choice to those from whom you desire something (Scotton, 1983, p. 123).

The Virtuosity Maxim: Make an otherwise marked choice whenever the linguistic ability of either S(peaker) or A(ddressee) makes the unmarked choice for the unmarked RO set in a conventionalized exchange infelicitous. (Scotton, 1983, p. 125).

Myers-Scotton's phrasing for the deference maxim makes it sound as if anyone speaking the interlocutor's code is after free groceries, but it need not be that--a speaker may "want" from an interlocutor merely to know the time of day, a quick hello, acceptance as a speaker of her second language, or the pleasure of conversation, in other words, a social rather than material "something."

It can be seen that in an intercultural conversation, these maxims allow inferences that lead to the reactions characterized in (4) through (7) above. If E speaks German to G, and G interprets this action as in accordance with the Deference maxim, G may conclude that E is showing deference to her, and react as in (4). If, however, E speaks German to G and G interprets this as an action in accord with the Virtuosity maxim, her reaction will look more like (5), because she will be quite justified in drawing the inference that E is speaking German because G's English seems not to be quite good enough.

Similarly, if E speaks English to G, G may conclude that E is choosing not to follow the Virtuosity maxim, probably because G's English is good enough, and G's reaction of type (6) is justified. But if E speaks English and G interprets that as a failure to follow the Deference maxim, she will be quite justified in reacting as in (7). Myers-Scotton's maxims are so constructed that in an intercultural conversation between learners, an act of code choice is interpretable as following from either of the maxims, or as flouting them both. If E speaks German to G, G may interpret this action as in accord with either Deference or Virtuosity. Both maxims point the speaker in the same direction: the speaker chooses the interlocutor's code by following either one; thus, the interlocutor does not know why the speaker made the choice she did. Similarly, a speaker may choose her own language and thus flout either maxim--and again, the interlocutor may not know which maxim the speaker intended to flout. This type of relationship between maxims, where each leads to the same linguistic choice, I would like to call a *confluence* of maxims. A confluence is different from a flout, violation, clash or opting out (Grice, 1975), in that both maxims enjoin the same linguistic behavior. On the other hand, when two maxims are both flouted, the result is a *double-flout*. As long as two or more maxims point a speaker in the direction of the same marked choice, a confluence or double-flout of maxims is possible--and it is this confluence or double-flout that results in sociopragmatic ambiguity.

Sociopragmatic ambiguity might seem to be classifiable as a type of pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983), if "H perceives S's utterance as ambivalent where S intended no

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ambivalence" (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). However, in the case with code choice, hearers do not always perceive an ambivalence on the part of speakers, as shown by examples (9) and (10b) above; rather, they perceive and focus on a single intention ("she's speaking English because my German isn't good enough"), may not notice the existence of a second possible intention ("she's speaking English in order to try to be polite to me"), and may then proceed to think the worst of their interlocutor. The pragmatic failure, if it is such, does not arise because of a perceived ambivalence, but because the hearer has perceived only one meaning of a genuinely sociopragmatically ambiguous linguistic choice on the part of the speaker.

Sociopragmatic ambiguity might also seem to fit Thomas's (1983) category of sociopragmatic failure, which "stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior" (Thomas, 1983, p. 99). Thomas gives examples of sociopragmatic failure as stemming from a speaker's (usually a NNS's) different assessment of 1) the size of imposition involved, 2) cultural taboos, 3) power and social distance, or 4) value judgements ("pragmatic ground rules" and the relation between pragmatic principles). These explanations all concern knowledge of the particular culture that the learner is trying to interact in, such as "when or for what services it is appropriate to thank" (Thomas, 1983, p. 109), knowledge that the learner has not yet acquired.

The sociopragmatic ambiguity of code choice, at least, arises from a different kind of lack of knowledge--not a lack of knowledge of the culture involved, but a lack of knowledge of the intentions and motivations of the individual interlocutor. It is not so much a case of the speaker failing to understand something about her target language or culture, but rather a situation where one really cannot tell in advance what the intentions and motivations (and hence, reactions) of one's interlocutor will be, since these are not culturally determined. As shown above, these intentions, motivations and reactions are not predictable: some Americans will want to speak German, while others will hope to avoid such an experience. Furthermore, the reasons behind an individual's code choice preference will arise out of situation-specific intentions; this is the point behind Scotton's Marked Choice Maxim. Thus, if sociopragmatic ambiguity is a type of sociopragmatic failure (a label I am reluctant to apply, since the fault seems to lie in the situation, rather than with the speakers), it comes about because of a reason different from those Thomas has identified.

THE SOCIOPRAGMATIC AMBIGUITY OF PRONOUN CHOICE

Let us turn now to the second example of SPA, the choice of address pronouns in languages, unlike modern English, where there is a choice. This is a well-researched, familiar topic, and I will only skim the surface. However, I hope to show that the Gricean-Scottonian mechanism used in analyzing the code choice example is also applicable here; Myers-Scotton's framework allows an explanation for the ambiguity of pronoun choice through maxim confluence. The value of this explanation is that it brings into the Gricean fold a familiar phemonenon which has not been analyzed before in terms of maxim interaction.

In the seminal works on this topic, Brown and Gilman (1960) and Gilman and Brown (1958) demonstrate the sociopragmatic ambiguity of second person pronouns in their two

commonest variants--at least in European languages--what they call the T and V pronouns (see also Brown and Ford (1961) and Braun (1988) on the broader topic of address terms in general). The V pronoun (as in French *vous*, German *Sie*, etc.) usually conveys either respect or social distance or both. Speakers use V to address teachers or other high status persons, including, in some families, parents (Lambert and Tucker, 1976). V is also used to address equal status adults to whom one does not feel particularly close. The T pronoun (e.g French *tu*, German *du*, etc.) conveys either intimacy or status/age inferiority on the part of the addressee relative to the speaker--or both. Speakers use T to address children, most animals (but apparently not police dogs), close friends, and, in German, usually, and in many families in French-speaking countries, parents (Lambert and Tucker, 1976). What is crucial here is the fact that while the V form has a positive interpretation in terms of status, it implies social distance--a possible negative; similarly, while the T form can convey warmth and intimacy, it can also convey an uncomfortable status difference between participants, with the recipient of T in a lower-status position. While symmetrical pronoun usage is generally expected, according to Brown and Gilman--people either say T or V to each other--still asymmetrical uses do exist, as Lambert and Tucker (1976) and Mühlhäusler and Harré (1990) have shown--where one party says V and is addressed as T. The potential therefore exists that a unilateral change from V to T could indicate the wish for either a new symmetrical or a new asymmetrical relationship. A change from T to V could indicate a sudden realization of status difference that should be recognized or a distancing from the interlocutor.[2] For example, I've had the experience of having a German exchange student address me as *du*, assuming that I was a fellow student, then suddenly realize that I was a professor, and address me as *Sie*. If we had known each other for longer, her sudden switch of pronoun forms might have hurt my feelings, because it could have been interpreted as her wanting to distance herself from me. Thus, the V form has the potential for SPA, in that it allows two very different inferences about the speaker's perception of her relationship to the hearer.

The T form can also be ambiguous. While living in Germany in my early twenties, I had the opportunity to attend a German Quaker meeting a few times. A very old, dignified, learned and serious German Quaker gentleman addressed me as *du*. While I realized that this was probably just like the now-defunct practice of English-speaking Quakers of using *thee*, it also seemed possible to me that the use of *du* was intended to index our vast age difference. In any case, I could not believe that I was supposed to reciprocate and call this person *du*. I was very uncomfortable with this ambiguity, and retreated to using impersonal sentences in my dealings with the German Quakers.

Howell and Klassen (1971) give another example of a situation in which pronoun choice can result in SPA. The German-speaking Mennonites of Herschel, Saskatchewan are a community of immigrants from two different places, Danzig and the Ukraine. Each subcommunity has a different norm for pronoun choice, with the Danzigers using symmetrical, and the Ukrainians asymmetrical patterns. In a speech community like this one, where two different norms are available, the possibilities for SPA are obvious. A speaker may switch from *Sie* to *du* (it must be an older speaker who initiates such a switch); the hearer may be in doubt as to whether the switch indexes a move towards closer friendship, in accord with the symmetrical pattern, or if what is indexed is that the speaker is in some way asserting his higher status, in accord with the asymmetrical pattern. A switch from *du*

to *Sie* would have the possibilities for double interpretation that I encountered when the German exchange student initiated that same switch with me, either a sudden realization that deference should be paid, or a desire for increased social distance.

Within Myers-Scotton's framework, maxims can be constructed to explain this sociopragmatic ambiguity of pronoun choice.

(15) *Social Distance*: Choose the marked form of the second person pronoun (or other form of address) when you wish to change the social distance between you and the interlocutor.

Status: Choose the marked form of the second person pronoun (or other form of address) when you wish to change the status relationship between you and your interlocutor.

The maxims of (15) would follow naturally from the Marked Choice Maxim of Myers-Scotton (1993b, p. 131), given in (13) above.

A change in address pronoun from expected V to T (as by the German Quaker) can be interpreted as following from the Social Distance maxim, in which case, it indexes a move towards greater intimacy or friendship (this can happen, by the way, without a formal ceremony). But that same pronoun switch can also be interpreted as following from the Status maxim, in which case it indexes an assertion of status superiority on the part of the speaker with respect to the addressee. Both maxims enjoin the same linguistic behavior, but for clearly different reasons--another case of maxim confluence.

Similarly, the move from T to V can be described as a case of confluence. A speaker can change to V to index respect for a high status addressee, as the German exchange student no doubt intended (at least I hope so), following the Status maxim. But the same move can be interpreted as following from the Social Distance maxim, and as indexing the speaker's wish to put increased distance between herself and the addressee, with whom she was previously friendly. I am told by a native speaker of German that such a move is rare, and devastating, but it is possible. Again, both maxims steer the speaker towards the same linguistic choice, but with different sociopragmatic reasons; this is another case of confluence.

Thus, for pronoun choice, as with code choice, sociopragmatic ambiguity arises because two maxims guide the speaker to make the same linguistic choice; the reason for SPA is maxim confluence.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND A QUESTION OR TWO

Sociopragmatic ambiguity in code choice and in address pronoun choice, two cases which, at first glance, seem to have little to do with each other, are shown within a system of markedness and negotiation to arise from the same cause, i.e., from a confluence of maxims that direct the choice of code or of form, or from a double-flout of maxims. In

confluence, two maxims enjoin the speaker to choose the same form; as the hearer perceives the forms, she may not be able to decide which of the two possible maxims motivated its choice. In a double-flout, the choice of a linguistic form implies that two maxims have been flouted; SPA arises because this double-flouting allows at least two possible inferences by the hearer.

In introducing the notion of pragmatic confluence, we encounter another question. Is confluence a possible interaction between the original Gricean maxims as well as between those maxims following from the Negotiation Principle of Myers-Scotton? Since Grice's original maxims guide the speaker towards more expected, or unmarked behavior, a confluence between them would not be particularly noticeable. This is why confluence has not seemed like a necessary notion until now. Consider Grice's example of speaker A asking B how their mutual acquaintance C likes his new job, and B's reply: "Oh, quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet." (Grice, 1975, p. 43) The reply flouts not only Relevance, but Quantity as well (we don't really find out much about C's new job). This reply, in fact a double-flout, is unexpected (and therefore worthy of remark). If B had instead followed both Relevance and Quantity--a case of confluence, the reply would have been something more expected (and less marked), such as, "Oh fine, he likes his colleagues and the work is interesting." Because of the nature of Grice's maxims, this case of maxim confluence does not result in sociopragmatic ambiguity. While sociopragmatic ambiguity can arise from either confluence of Scotton's maxims or a double-flout, a confluence of Grice's maxims does not seem to produce SPA.

A double-flout of Scotton's maxims can also cause SPA, whereas a double-flout of Grice's maxims produces implicature, of course; is it possible to see SPA, therefore, as merely another form of implicature? I think we must hold the two phenomena distinct, because of the peculiar nature of confluence: if SPA is a subset of implicature, then some cases of it are caused by confluence (between Scotton's maxims), while other cases of confluence (between Grice's maxims) fail to cause implicature. This embarrassing contradiction does not arise, if we keep SPA as a category distinct from implicature (though we are left with the embarrassment that double-flouting results in some cases in implicature, and in others, SPA).

Scotton's maxims are different from Grice's, in that hers direct the speaker towards marked behavior--hence, the marked behavior and its accompanying SPA are more salient. The introduction of markedness into Gricean pragmatics has enriched the framework by expanding the type and function of maxims in the Gricean system, and has opened up new possibilities for the interpretation of linguistic behavior and for the interaction of maxims.

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NOTES

[1]Subjects are designated by nationality (American or German), sex (F or M), by the taped conversation they heard (A or B), and by age (the number following the three letters).

[2]Notice that the potential for sociopragmatic ambiguity in this case has nothing to do with differences between cultures, but rather, exists within a single language system (or several such), so that Thomas's notion of pragmatic failure is not applicable here.

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ROUTINE AND INDIRECTION IN INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS

Gabriele Kasper

In this paper, two types of conventionality will be distinguished. Different kinds of indirection and pragmatic routines will be described in terms of degrees of conventionality. Select examples from the literature and a few choice anecdotes will demonstrate how L2 learners handle these aspects of their pragmatic competence. Based on two pertinent studies, it will be argued that learners' social environment and learning context need closer attention if we wish to gain better understanding of the acquisition of routines and indirectness by nonnative speakers.

INTRODUCTION

Pragmaticists such as van Dijk (1985) and Thomas (in press) assert that utterances are inherently indeterminate. Other scholars, among them Coulmas (1981) and Pawley and Syder (1983), emphasize the role of prepackaged, formulaic routines in adult native speakers' communicative competence. Coulmas (1981) notes in the introduction to his book on conversational routine that "a great deal of communicative activity consists of enacting routines making use of prefabricated linguistic units in a well-known and generally accepted manner" (p. 1). Both strategies - indirection and routine - are available in any speech community. As regularly employed means of accomplishing linguistic action, they are pragmalinguistic universals. Their universality notwithstanding, it is also well attested that both routine and indirection can involve comprehension and production problems for nonnative speakers.

In this paper, two types of conventionality will be distinguished. Different kinds of indirection and pragmatic routines will be described in terms of degrees of conventionality. Select examples from the literature and a few choice anecdotes will demonstrate how L2 learners handle these aspects of their pragmatic competence. Based on two pertinent studies, it will be argued that learners' social environment and learning context need closer attention if we wish to gain better understanding of the acquisition of routines and indirectness by nonnative speakers.

TWO TYPES OF CONVENTIONALITY

In order to get a conceptual handle on routine and indirection as strategies of linguistic action, I shall follow Clark's (1979) distinction of two types of convention of usage (Searle, 1975). *Conventions of means* refer to the kinds of semantic structure which have acquired a standardized illocutionary force, for instance, in English, an ability question functioning as a request. In the speech act realization literature, conventions of means are the semantic formulae (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983) by which different speech acts can be performed. *Conventions of form* comprise the standardized linguistic formulations associated with a particular illocution. Conventions of form are always associated with one or more

conventions of means, whereas the reverse is not true. For instance, *I'm sorry* is routinely associated with a meaning convention such as 'expressing regret', but regret can be expressed in other ways than by saying you're sorry.

The two types of conventions can be envisioned as each constituting a continuum, representing different degrees of conventionality. One end of each continuum represents entirely fixed, invariable semantic formulae and expressions. The opposite end comprises utterances whose semantic structure and forms of expression are not conventionalized for any particular pragmatic usage. Each continuum will be discussed in turn.

Conventions of Means

At its high end, the **conventions of means continuum** includes semantic formulae which are strongly associated with a particular illocutionary force. Their use may range anywhere from strongly expected to contextually prescribed in the speech community. For instance, thanking somebody for goods, services or a kindness requires an explicit expression of gratitude in Japanese (Ikoma, 1993; Miyake, 1993) and is by far the most preferred semantic formula in American English (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986). In Japanese, another frequent semantic formula used with the illocution of thanking is the expression of apology. However, the use of this meaning convention is more context-dependent than expressing gratitude, in that offering apology is called for when the giver is status-higher and the received good or service seen as involving an appreciable debt to the giver (Ikoma, 1993). Thus, offering apology appears to be less conventionalized as a **general** semantic strategy of thanking than expressing gratitude, although under specific contextual conditions, apologizing will be highly conventionalized for the illocution of thanking. The interaction of conventionality of pragmalinguistic usage (as illustrated by different thanking routines) and conventionality of **context** (the extent to which a context is scripted) has consequences for the assignment of illocutionary force in online processing, as shown by Gibbs (1983) for native speakers of English and Takahashi and Roitblat (1994) for Japanese-English interlanguage users.

In the case of thanking and apologizing, the most highly conventionalized semantic formulae are derived from the sincerity condition. Blum-Kulka's (1989) cross-linguistic comparison of conventionally indirect requests suggests that in the four languages examined (Australian English, Canadian French, Argentinian Spanish, Hebrew), the highest degree of conventionalization resides in ability queries, that is, in semantic formulae linked to the first preparatory condition of requesting. Topicalization of other felicity conditions, such as the second preparatory condition and the sincerity condition, varies much more intra-culturally and cross-linguistically. For example, in the corpus of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), querying H's willingness accounted for 27% of the Australian English requests, but only for 6% of the conventionally indirect strategies in Argentinian Spanish. Yet in other speech acts, conventionality of semantic formulae seems hardly related to felicity conditions at all. For instance, a common refusal strategy in American English, Japanese (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990), and Chinese (Chen, Ye, & Zhang, 1995) is giving a reason or an excuse for non-compliance, often prefaced by an expression of regret. These highly conventionalized refusal strategies have no direct relationship to the felicity conditions of refusals (although by giving a reason for refusing,

S invites H to infer the propositional content rule underlying S's refusal, i.e., that S is not going to engage in the course of action proposed by H). The relationship between semantic formulae and felicity conditions thus seems to affect the degree of conventionality in some speech acts but much less in others. The conventionality of semantic devices such as giving reasons and expressing regret in refusing can be more readily explained as instances of routinized conversational implicature. An expression of regret is routinely heard as a refusal if it occurs as a response to a *conditionally relevant* initiating act by H, such as a request, suggestion, offer, or invitation.

Cross-culturally different conventions of means have frequently been cited as a source of pragmatic failure. In their studies of expressions of gratitude by nonnative speakers, Eisenstein and Bodman (1986, 1993) found negative pragmatic transfer of apologies and well-wishes to the giver. For example, upon being offered a loan from a friend, a Japanese learner said ***I'm sorry. I'll always remember the debt of gratitude***. A student from the Middle East responded *may God increase your bounty*, thereby providing the title of Bodman and Eisenstein's 1988 paper. Two further examples of attested pragmatic failure due to unfamiliar conventions of means are the ritual invitation in American culture and the ritual refusal in Chinese. According to an anecdotal report by Wolfson (1983), these culture-bound rituals can be quite risky. Ritual invitations and refusals can lead to misunderstanding if the receiver does not pick up the particular meaning and form conventions which signal quite clearly whether the invitation or the refusal is ritual or substantive. For the American invitation to be ritual, it needs to be vague, as in *we must do lunch* ***sometime***. By contrast, *Let's have lunch tomorrow 12:30 at the Hau Tree Lanai* cannot be ritual. The Chinese refusal of an offer or invitation is ritual when the reason offered for refusing relates to the inviter's costs, rather than to the invitee's, as shown by Gu (1990), Mao (1994), and Chen, Ye, & Zhang (1995). So, *you're too busy, it's too much work for you* index that the invitee is only being polite but has no intention to insist on her refusal. A substantive refusal refers to refuser's costs, such as prior alternative engagements.

From the speech act realization literature, it appears that speech communities differ not so much in the absolute availability of a semantic formula as part of a speech act set. Rather, most cross-cultural variation relates to the degree of conventionality of a particular meaning convention. A few examples of such **relative** differences in conventionalization are

- rejecting (rather than accepting or qualifying) compliments (Wolfson, 1989)
- complimenting as a request strategy (Holmes & Brown, 1987)
- complaining through an intermediary (Stèinberg Du, 1995)
- giving positive remarks in corrections to a status-lower person (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993)
- offering a statement of philosophy in refusals (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990)
- explicitly apologizing, explaining and offering repair in apologies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Horie Ingkaphirom, 1993; Bergman & Kasper, 1993)
- selecting different directness levels in requesting (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; House & Kasper, 1987).

Some of the difficulty in assigning illocutionary force and politeness values to differentially conventionalized semantic formulae clearly derives from differences in cultural contextualization. For instance, rejecting compliments and praise (not only of oneself but also of members of one's ingroup, such as spouses and children) may be culturally required because acceptance would be seen as lack of modesty. Apologizing as a thanking routine is meaningful when obtaining goods or services of a certain order and from certain people creates social obligations and imbalance. Conventions of means are motivated by social order, and they do not necessarily go away when the social order changes, even though they may become less frequent. Thus Held (1987) showed how quite excessive expressions of indebtedness as thanking routines abounded in 17th century France, and they are still used in contemporary French, but usually tongue in cheek (e.g., *je vous baise les mains, je suis votre serviteur* (Held, 1987, p. 216).

Conventionalized implicature such as the semantic formulae in speech act realization needs to be distinguished from novel, situation-dependent implicatures, which constitute the non-conventionalized end of the conventions of means continuum. Bouton (1988) demonstrated cross-cultural variation in learners' interpretation of nonconventional implicature, and some effect of type of implicature on learners' comprehension. He also showed that in an ESL context, exposure functions as the great equalizer - after 4 1/2 years of residence, learners were very successful in understanding most nonconventional implicatures, irrespective of their cultural background (1992).

Bouton distinguished different types of implicature depending on the Gricean maxim that is violated. A speech act-based approach to account for linguistic action at the low-conventionality end of the scale has been proposed by Weizman. In a series of studies, Weizman (1985, 1989, 1993) demonstrated that *requestive hints* display degrees of opacity at the illocutionary and propositional level. On independent scales ranging from relative transparency to extreme opacity, illocutionary opacity is minimal when H's commitment is queried (*are you going to give us a hand* as a request for help), stronger in the case of feasibility questions (*did you come by car* as a request for a ride) and most opaque when a potential reason for requesting is stated (*I haven't got the time to clean up* as an attempt to get H to clean the kitchen). Weizman (1989) argues that the question strategies are less opaque than the reason statements because of the stronger conditional relevance of questions on their second pair parts: either H provides a reply (*yes/no*) or 'takes the hint' and makes an offer. Statements of potential reason, on the other hand, are not particularly eliciting, except perhaps for a backchanneling signal. On the propositional scale, requestive intent is most transparent when some reference is made to the desired act (*I haven't got the time to clean up the kitchen*), less transparent when H's involvement in the act or some precondition for it is focused (*you've left the kitchen in a mess*), and most opaque when some relevant component relating to the act is mentioned, whereas the desired action itself and H's part in it remain implicit (*the kitchen is in a mess*). The illocutionary and propositional scales are thought to interact in various ways, so that a given utterance may be extremely opaque on one scale and quite transparent on the other (Weizman, 1989).

Weizman's analysis accounts for nonconventionally indirect requests. It remains to be seen whether it can be extended to a more general framework for the analysis of nonconventional indirectness. Studies of other speech acts suggest that what might be quite

a transparent hinting strategy in the context of requesting may well prove rather inscrutable when the illocutionary intent is different.

A case in point, much discussed in the literature, is the use of *questions as a strategy of indirection* (Goody, 1978). A particularly well-publicized example is the enigmatic title of Beebe and Takahashi's 1989 paper "*Do you have a bag*". In a sushi bar in New York, a Japanese waiter warned an American female customer by these same words that she was in the process of having her purse stolen. Being attuned to Japanese pragmatics, Beebe disambiguated the waiter's comment as the warning that it was meant to be. The implied illocutionary force, while obscure to the American customer, would presumably have been perfectly transparent to a Japanese guest.

Questions are productive conventions of means for the expression of a large variety of indirect illocutions. Perhaps it is because of their universality that they are fertile ground for cross-cultural misunderstanding. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) and Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford (1991) report on questioning strategies used in unequal power encounters by the lower status participant. Beebe and Takahashi (1989) reported about series of questions, used by Japanese students to gently convey to their professor that she had made a mistake. The American professor, unfamiliar with this status-preserving convention of criticizing a superior, felt rather more face-threatened by this other-imposed 'self-discovery' than she would have if the mistake had been clearly pointed out to her. In the Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford study, some students responded to their advisor's suggestions by asking questions about the suggested course, such as in the following exchange:

(1) Advisor: You will need to take, uh, after you take L503
Student: ah, excuse me, what was the name? (p. 47).

Questions of this type would sometimes occur in series, serving to avoid an overt rejection of the advisor's suggestion and thus preserving the appearance of status congruence. Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford showed that the use of questions as pseudo-status congruent strategies was not limited to the Japanese students, nor to the nonnative speakers as a group. However, only the NNS used information and repetition requests as avoidance strategies when they intended to reject their advisor's suggestion.

Perhaps related to Beebe's and Takahashi's "*Bag*" example is the convention in communities such as Japan, Indonesia and China to interpret requests for information as requests for action, especially when the questioner is the status-higher person (e.g., Sakamoto & Naotsuka, 1982). Surely requesting information can and does acquire the force of requests for action in Anglo communication. But quite often, ambiguity remains unresolved because the implied illocutionary force is weakly conventionalized. A well-known example is quoted by Gumperz (1982) in his Discourse Strategies, illustrating pragmatic failure in the conversation between a British-American couple:

(2) Husband: Do you know where today's paper is?
Wife: *I'll* get it for you.
Husband: That's O.K. *I'll* get it.
Wife: No, **I'll** get it. (p. 135, emphases as in original)

As illustrated, the availability of particular meaning conventions in a speech community, or even across speech communities, does not make their use fool-proof, especially when they are weakly conventionalized and not associated with specific form conventions. The indeterminacy of such questions may be constrained by contextualization conventions, mutual knowledge, history of the interaction and the like, but they essentially remain negotiable and fraught with potential misunderstanding.

And yet, even if S's intention and H's uptake do not match, as in the Gumperz example, the husband is unlikely to be as flabbergasted by his wife's helpful response as Beebe's American ladies in the shushi bar were. 'Not getting the hint', or taking one where none was intended, because of failure to attend to relevant cues or activating pertinent background knowledge is one thing, comparable perhaps to lower-level slips of the ear, which are evidence of temporarily relaxed **control** rather than defective knowledge. Unfamiliarity with a convention of means is quite a different matter. Surely it is often possible for a listener to decipher novel implicatures, but when they are mapped on semantic and pragmatic patterns for which there are no pre-existing conventions in the listener's pragmatic knowledge, she might be hard pressed to inference successfully. Familiarity with conventions of means is grounded in the wider context of cultural conventions and ways of speaking. Conventionality in a target community means nothing to a novice to that community, but since meaning conventions, perhaps even more than conventions of form, are taken for granted by members, they will be unsuspecting of the communication problems which unfamiliar conventions may present to the newcomer.

My single most memorable encounter with a peculiar convention of means in English is the so-called Pope Question. The Pope Q is a rhetorical question whose propositional content is unrelated to the preceding discourse and hence violates the Maxim of Relevance. Because it queries the obvious, it also violates the Quantity Maxim. Its prototypes are *Is the Pope Catholic?*, glossed as 'of course' and *Is the Pope Jewish?*, glossed as 'of course not'. My first encounter with the Pope Q happened when I was taking a walk through Sydney at the AILA Congress in 1987, together with a male colleague. We were chatting about nothing in particular, when suddenly in response to some question that I can't remember he says *Is the Pope Catholic?* I still recall my feeling of utter amazement, the mild shock that a sudden experience of cognitive dissonnance sometimes creates. At first it seemed impossible to attach any meaning to this apparently off the wall comment. In fact I briefly considered whether there was something wrong with my companion. But then the implicature machine started rolling, I figured out that his implied meaning was 'of course, stupid', and just about managed to produce some unmarked form of uptake. All of this took place in milliseconds. There might have been a slight increase in response latency on my part, but not enough to disrupt the conversation. The pragmatic failure took place nowhere else but in my head, i.e., for those favoring conversation analysis over a speech act approach to pragmatics, it did not take place at all. At this first encounter with the Pope Q, it ranged far down at the low end of my personal conventions of means continuum. I perceived this expression as a highly idiosyncratic conversational implicature, a brain child of my companion's creative pragmalinguistic ability and predeliction for bad jokes. This incident happened at a time when I had been a learner of English as a foreign language for 27 years. My surprise and relief was therefore great when in the following year, I read Bouton's (1988) study of nonnative speakers' ability to interpret implicatures in English. Even given the benefit of an

ESL context rather than my continental European EFL environment, foreign students at the University of Illinois had the same trouble with the Pope Q as I did. Recently, Nishihara (1993) commented that the more inscrutable ways of conversational indirection are by no means "a patented monopoly" of Japanese pragmatics, but that Anglos have their own claim to fame when it comes to enigmatic ways of speaking. To my deep gratification, she cites as a case in point - the Pope Q (p. 27).

It has been argued that in cross-cultural communication, problems in assigning meaning to indirection of various sorts arises from a lack of shared pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. Such lack of common ground both makes it more difficult to coordinate action in the first place, and lessens the chances of successful repair once pragmatic failure has occurred (Janney & Arndt, 1992). However, as documented in the comprehensive literature on miscommunication between members of the same speech community (e.g., Coupland, Giles, & Wiemann, 1991), indirection is a hazardous business in native speaker interaction too. Why, then, asks Weizman (1989), bother with indirection at all?

Pragmatic folk wisdom has it that more indirect is more polite, a belief also promoted in the past by such eminent pragmaticists as Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987). And indeed, in the Japanese context, the negative politeness strategies reported by Beebe and Takahashi (1989) appear to preserve a higher-status interlocutor's positive face by providing her the opportunity for 'self-discovery'. However, studies by Walters (1979), House (1986), and Blum-Kulka (1987) demonstrate that greater opacity, as in nonconventionally indirect requests compared to their conventionally indirect counterparts, is perceived as less polite by NS of such languages as Puerto Rican Spanish (Walters, 1979), American English (Walters, 1979; Blum-Kulka, 1987), Hebrew (Blum-Kulka, 1987), British English, and German (House, 1986). Low conventionality of indirection thus does not seem to be motivated by politeness in these languages and is obviously inapt to transmit propositional and illocutionary information in a straightforward way. If nonconventional indirectness does little if anything for politeness and nothing for efficient information transmission, the nagging question remains what it is good for anyway. Weizman (1985, 1989, 1993) offers a convincing answer, at least as far as nonconventional indirectness in requests goes. What makes requestive hints an advantageous strategy at times is their potential for speakers "to have their cake and eat it", that is, to "cause an action to happen and at the same time avoid assuming responsibility for it" (1989, p. 71f.). Weizman calls this fundamental interactive property of nonconventional indirectness its *deniability potential*. Because it is the very essence of pragmatic indeterminacy that allows people to reject the interpretation assigned by H to their utterances, nonconventional indirectness is a prime candidate for metapragmatic comments of the type *that's not what I meant*. Furthermore, the inherent deniability potential of nonconventional indirectness explains why it is rarely used as a request strategy, compared to more direct request patterns, especially conventional indirectness. In the CCSARP data, native speakers of Australian and American English, German, Canadian French, Hebrew, and Argentinian Spanish (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Weizman, 1993) used requestive hints as rarely as in 5.6% of their entire request strategies. Native speakers of British English and Danish resorted to hinting even less frequently (4.5%, House & Kasper, 1987). In the same contexts, learners of Hebrew hinted in 8.4%, learners of English in 4.5% (Weizman, 1993), Danish learners of German and English in 2.9%, and German

learners of English in 3.5% of their total request strategies (House & Kasper, 1987). While it is quite possible that the data collection method (Discourse Completion Questionnaires) contributed to subjects' going more on record with their requests than they might do in authentic interaction, requestive hints were also very low frequency choices in open-ended roleplays (Kasper, 1981) and in different authentic encounters (Blum-Kulka, Danet, & Gerson, 1985). There is obvious contextual variation, as reported in all of the pertinent studies. However the overall lack of appeal of nonconventional indirectness as a request strategy is directly related to its deniability potential. While apparently not deemed very effective for requestive purposes by the examined 'Western' populations, nonconventional indirectness is a good thing for speakers to have handy when they don't wish to commit themselves to a particular course of action or seek to avoid accountability. And the need for ambiguity, which provides the desired loophole when opting out is more important than clarity and politeness, is satisfied by nonconventional indirectness in the case of other face-threatening acts such as complaining (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1987, 1993), disagreeing and criticizing (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989), correcting (Takahashi & Beebe, 1993), refusing (Beebe et al., 1990) and rejecting (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1991). The deniability hypothesis also throws a somewhat different light on the questioning strategy in unequal power encounters, discussed above. Whether the question strategy is an effective means to save the higher status interlocutor's face seems doubtful to some of the American professors who have been exposed to it, but it obviously appears to be an adequate device to save H's face in the communities where the strategy is more highly conventionalized. What is at least equally important though is the protection the question strategy offers to the lower-status speaker - and by 'protection' I don't mean face protection but protection from retaliation in case the higher status participant takes offense. S's face wants may be involved as well, but more in the sense of avoiding to appear disrespectful, or 'out of status', in Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's terms (1990, 1991). In order to capture this kind of reflective face want, a face concept centering around a person's social self, such as the one proposed for Chinese culture by Mao (1994), seems better suited than Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of positive face.

As for the processing of indirectness by NNS, Bouton (1988) found that type of implicature and learners' cultural background can account for differences in NNS's comprehension of implicature. While his study examined learners' comprehension of indirectness off-line, Takahashi and Roitblat (1994) probed into learners' on-line processing of conventional indirectness. They found (a) support for a multiple meaning model of pragmatic comprehension, and (b) no differences in illocutionary force assignment between NS and advanced Japanese learners of English. Since the learner populations in Bouton's and Takahashi and Roitblat's studies were proficient NNS, it remains a matter of future investigation whether less proficient learners do worse, and what developmental paths they follow in developing the ability to understand indirection at different levels of conventionality.

Conventions of Form

We will now consider the continuum representing different **conventions of form**. The low end of the continuum is occupied by the creatively produced utterances which have been the favorite child of linguistic theory. Requestive hints, nonconventionalized maxim

violations and a whole range of semantic formulae associated with specific speech acts do not combine with any conventions of form that regularly signal their illocutionary force. Processing has to rely on context, background knowledge, and utterance meaning. It is therefore the more conventionalized pole of the conventions of form continuum that we will focus upon.

In the literature, prepatterned speech has been discussed under such labels as routines, formulaes, formulaic speech, prefabricated patterns, unanalyzed chunks, gambits, lexical phrases, and perhaps a few others (e.g., Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992). Coulmas (1979, 1981) refers to the conventionalized forms which have particular pragmatic functions associated with them as *routine formulae*, described as '"highly conventionalized prepatterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less standardized communication situation" (1981, p. 3). Routine formulae thus form a subset of a broader class of prepackaged linguistic devices, termed *lexical phrases* by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992). In Nattinger and DeCarrico's theory, lexical phrases are defined as

> multi-word lexical phenomena that exist somewhere between the traditional poles of lexicon and syntax, conventionalized form/function composites that occur more frequently and have more idiomatically determined meaning than language that is put together each time (1992, p. 1).

Lexical phrases are part of speakers' *pragmalinguistic* knowledge because they have specific illocutionary, discourse organizational and politeness functions associated with them. They are also part of speaker's *sociopragmatic* knowledge in that their use is governed by contextual factors of the speech situation. Because my focus is on the pragmatic properties rather than on the lexical features of routines, I prefer the term 'pragmatic routines' or 'routine formulae' to 'lexical phrases'.

In order to describe the formal properties of pragmatic routines such as *hold your horses*, *thanks an awful lot*, or *could you do x?*, Nattinger and DeCarrico propose four structural criteria (p. 38ff): (1) length and grammatical status of the phrase, (2) whether its form is canonical or non-canonical, (3) whether the pattern is variable or fixed, and (4) whether the phrase is continuous or discontinuous (1992, p. 38). Each of these criteria presents a continuum rather than suggesting categorical applicability. For instance, of the three pragmatic routines just cited, *hold your horses* is the most fixed, *thanks an awful lot* is more variable, and *could you do x* is the most variable of the three. The four criteria lend themselves to describe four structural categories of pragmatic routines: polywords, institutional expressions, phrasal constraints, and sentence builders. *Polywords* are lexical items, such as *hold your horses* (as an expression of disagreement) or *at any rate* (as a discourse marker and fluency device). They come in canonical varieties, i.e., forms derivable from grammatical rules, as in *hold your horses* or *at any rate*. They also come in non-canonical varieties, in which case they present their own idiosyncratic minigrammar (Pawley & Syder, 1983), as in *as it were* as an exemplifier or *so far so good* as an expression of approval. Polywords allow no variability - for instance, the topic shifter *by the way* cannot be modified to *along the way* or *by the road*. They are continuous in that they do not allow for insertion of other lexical material. *Institutionalized expressions* such as greeting and parting formulae (*how are you*, *nice meeting you*) are invariable sentence-length

phrases, mostly canonical and continuous. Formulae such as *there you go* as expression of approval, *get a life* (disapproval), or *give me a break* (objection) illustrate the more frequent canonical subset. Some noncanonical ones are *long time no see* or *be that as it may*. *Phrasal constraints* are mostly shorter lexical frames to be completed by way of paradigmatic substitution, such as the canonical expressions *as far as I* ***can tell/know*** (qualifier) or the greeting *good* ***morning/afternoon/evening***, or non-canonical phrases such as the exemplifiers or *for* ***instance/example***. They are mostly but not always continuous (*the* ***sooner/earlier*** *the* ***better***).

Finally, *sentence builders*, or *lexicalized sentence stems* in Pawley and Syder's terminology (1983), supply frameworks for entire sentences, such as *modal + you + VP (for me)* as a conventionally indirect request pattern. Sentence builders are highly variable in the phrasal and clausal elements they permit, and they come both in canonical and non-canonical, continuous and discontinuous variants. An example for non-canonical and discontinuous is the comparator of the format *the* ***comparative*** *X, the* ***comparative*** Y, as *in the faster I speak, the sooner this talk will be over*, or *the longer we stay on the beach, the more sunburnt we will get*. It is an important feature of sentence builders that they combine "paradigmatic flexibility" with "syntagmatic simplicity" (p. 17f, 49ff). By and large, the four structural categories of lexical phrases can be arranged on continua of permitted variability and discontinuity, where polywords represent the low end, sentence builders the high end of each continuum, with institutionalized expressions and phrasal constraints coming in between (p. 45).

Nattinger and DeCarrico's analysis lends itself well to partially solve a puzzle in speech act theory, i.e., the issue of conventionalization of linguistic forms for certain pragmatic functions (Searle, 1975; Blum-Kulka, 1989). Why do some syntactic forms of requesting, for instance, become more conventionalized than others? Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) suggest that it is precisely the combination of syntagmatic simplicity with paradigmatic flexibility that favors conventionalization of such syntactic pattern as *modal + you + VP* (*can/could you park the car*), and variants of the same, such as *modal + you (mind/kindly/be willing to) + VP* (*would you mind turning the TV down*; *would you kindly stop using the blender while I'm on the phone*; *would you be willing to accept my chapter three months after the deadline)*. By means of a slot-and-filler technique operating on a few basic syntagmas, conventionally indirect requests with a large variation in surface elements can be generated, preserving the illocutionary force of requesting but expressing different politeness values. Syntagmatic simplicity and paradigmatic flexibility are also the structural features of other highly conventionalized sentence builders. For instance, compliments are routinely realized in different varieties of English by a very small set of sentence builders, such as *I + like/love + your + NP* (*I like your new hair cut*) and *your + NP + be/look + adj*, where the adjective is usually part of a short list of positively evaluating items (*nice, good, great*, as in *your hair looks great*)(Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Holmes, 1988).

The structural properties of pragmatic routines are associated with their sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic **functions**. Under a **sociolinguistic** perspective, pragmatic routines serve to reach recurrent communicative goals in standardized social contexts. Coulmas (1979) identifies two major sociolinguisic purposes of pragmatic routines: Maintaining orderliness

of communication, and supporting group identity. Pragmatic routines help **maintaining orderliness** of communication by

> (1) regulating emotional situations; (2) reducing the complexity of social interaction; (3) facilitating decision processes in the selection of communicative means; (4) organizing reactions to social situations; and (5) furnishing the verbal means for communicating "the right idea in the right place".

Pragmatic routines serve to express **group identity**

> (1) by serving as instruments for establishing rapport [...]; (2) by reinforcing the self-awareness of the members of a group as group members; (3) by perpetuating goals, values, norms, and customs of a group, and in yielding the desired effect if properly employed; (4) by indicating the speaker's familiarity with and readiness to conform to the norms of the group; and (5) by being a means of defining social relations and relative social status of communicators (1979, p. 254).

To these macro-sociolinguistic purposes may be added their pragmatic and discourse-organizational functions at the micro-level of communicative interaction: as illocutionary force indicating devices, politeness markers to mitigate and aggravate illocutionary force, discourse-regulators to open, maintain, and close conversation, and to mark discourse boundaries, and as contextualization conventions.

Coulmas (1979) notes as one fundamental sociolinguistic function of pragmatic routines their potential to reduce the complexity of social interaction. At the **psycholinguistic** level, this sociolinguistic function is matched by a reduction of processing costs. In terms of storage, it has been proposed that prefabricated patterns are multiply encoded in the mental lexicon, as unanalyzed chunks **and** in terms of their individual lexical components (e.g., Zernick & Dyer, 1987). Retrieval is therefore faster because unlike in the case of novel utterances, routines can be imported whole-sale into the formulator (Levelt, 1989) during speech production, rather than having to be assembled from scratch. The "shared representations" proposed by Stemberger (1985) in his connectionist model of speech production would also be compatible with a multiple storage model for pragmatic routines. As with any kind of routinized behavior, the advantages are low attentional demands and a high success rate if the routine is properly executed. Formulae have also been analyzed as indicators of planning units in speech production. As demonstrated, for instance, by Dechert (1983), Raupach (1984), and Rehbein (1987a, b), formulaic chunks are regular features of longer utterances in learner speech, where they alternate with newly created utterance stretches. The freshly assembled utterance parts are typically marked by less fluent delivery, such as lower rate of articulation and increased pausing. In the alternation between fluently executed formulae and less fluent novel utterance stretches, the formulae serve as "islands of reliability" (Dechert 1983, quoting Lesser & Erman, 1977) which free planning capacity and allow the speaker to monitor her utterance pre- and post execution.

From a psycholinguistic viewpoint, then, pragmatic routines have a prime function in promoting fluency in speech production. But while any kind of proceduralized linguistic knowledge facilitates fluent speech, pragmatic formulae additionally support fluent production

because they are indexed for specific pragmatic and discourse functions. Hence, in terms of Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, it is conceivable that in constructing the preverbal message in initial utterance planning, conceptual units for which pragmatic routines exist are identified faster than those for which no prepackaged solutions are available, and can thus be sent to the formulator more speedily.

With the notable exception of a recent paper by Schmidt (1992), mainstream SL research has been less interested in the function of routines in fluency than in their role in second language development. Researchers such as Hakuta (1974) and Wong Fillmore (1976) have demonstrated the role of formulaic speech for the initial stages of L2 development, where routines help learners communicate with minimal resources and hence elicit further input. Furthermore, prepackaged interlanguage units can be gradually unpacked and thus serve as material for rule learning. In the interlanguage pragmatics literature, by contrast, pragmatic routines have predominantly been seen as a weak point in learners' pragmalinguistic competence. In a great number of studies (e.g., Wildner-Bassett, 1984), it has been shown that learners fail to use pragmatic routines when such formulae are called for, use contextually inappropriate routines, choose the right routine but modify it somehow so that it misfires, or misunderstand pragmatic routines in the input. Edmondson and House (1991) argue that the waffling effect, i.e., the tendency found in some studies that learners talk too much, may be directly related to a lack of readily available conversational routines. Edmondson and House suggest that learners compensate the absence of shorter, situationally specialized routines in their pragmatic knowledge by constructing rule-based, novel utterances, which require more linguistic material and processing effort to convey pragmatic intent.

Furthermore, two studies (Wildner-Bassett, 1984; Rehbein, 1987b) suggest a strong impact of social context and learning environment on learners' use and acquisition of pragmatic routines. The study by Wildner-Bassett (1984) examined the acquisition of pragmatic routines (*gambits*) by advanced German learners of English as a foreign language. The subjects were 36 men working for a major industrial company at middle and upper management level. These learners participated in either of two types of English courses, each giving them 40 hrs of instruction. The control group was taught according to the standard method used in the company's in-house language instruction, a vaguely communicative approach. The experimental group was instructed by an adapted version of suggestopedia. Instructional effects were measured by pre- and post-tests, including role plays with a native speaker and a written multiple choice test.

The main finding of Wildner-Bassett's study is good news: learners in both groups improved their knowledge and use of gambits significantly during the period of instruction; however, learners in the control group did better than their colleagues in the experimental group. (Whether they improved **because** of the instruction is, of course, an inference, but in the extant EFL context, it seems highly plausible.) Quality and quantity of gambit use increased in both groups. In the control group but not in the experimental group, learners' use of fillers and hesitators decreased. Since the 'communicative' control group did better than the 'suggestopedic' experimental group, this finding lends further empirical support to the role played by pragmatic formulae in fluency.

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Some major findings from a qualitative analysis of the learners' use of gambits in the role plays were the following (pp. 304ff.).

1. The pragmalinguistic functions of frequent routines such as *you see*, *I guess* or *excuse me* were overgeneralized by some learners, e.g.

   (3) NS: Your name's not on the list but perhaps I can fix you up with a room despite that
   NNS: no *scuse me* I have ordered exactly a room with a bath and I insist on (p. 306)

2. Interlocutor input may prime learners' use of specific formulae. Thus one learner did not use the gambit *you see* at all until the NS provided it, upon which the learner started using *you see* in contextually appropriate and inappropriate functions.

3. While the overall quality of the learners' use of pragmatic routines had improved, some problems remained, such as

   - transfer errors resulting from literal translations of L1 formulae, as in *believe it to me* (*glauben Sie mir[dativ]*) instead of *believe me*, or *on the other side* (*auf der anderen Seite*) instead of *on the other hand*;
   - blends of two formulae, as in *on the other rate*, a blend of *on the other hand* and *at any rate*, or *I would be very appreciated* from *I would be very happy* and *I would appreciate it* (cf. Bodman & Eisenstein's (1988) *"I very appreciate it"*);
   - illegal modification, such as in 'that's a very pity';
   - lack of functional differentiation, as in this exchange:

     (4) NS: the next flight to Frankfurt leaves tomorrow morning at eight thirty
     NNS: oh I *I really cannot agree* I have a very important negotiation tomorrow (p. 345).

   - the "clanger phenomena" (Arndt & Janney, 1980), i.e., aggressive utterances or utterance elements which deviate stylistically from the politeness level of the ongoing interaction.

Wildner-Bassett's study demonstrates that pragmatic routines can indeed be taught quite successfully. One of the questions her findings raise is whether the remaining problems are somehow related to the foreign language learning context. Perhaps in a second language environment which affords more target language input and opportunities for interaction with native and other nonnative speakers, learners will achieve a more native-like command of pragmatic routines.

Rehbein's study (1987b) on the use of "multiple formulae" by Turkish learners of German as a second language did not support the assumption that a second language context

per se provides better learning opportunities. The Turkish learners were migrant workers who had lived in the Federal Republic of Germany for more than eight years. They had not received any formal instruction in German. A striking feature of the routines observed in these learners' speech production is their linguistically simplified structure and functionally extended scope. Some of the categories noted by Rehbein (1987b) are

- IL-specific formulae to convey illocutionary force, e.g., *ich bin* 'I am' for marking speaker involvement in assertions relating to past or planned actions, as *in ich bin de Urlaub fah-ren ... Tuerkei 'I am then vacation go ... Turkey.*
- marking subjective evaluations to qualify assertions by means of the qualifier *normalerweise* 'usually'. The learners use this qualifier both in its target-like meaning 'usually' and in order to express a discrepancy between two states of affairs. The target form associated with this second meaning is the modal particle *eigentlich* 'properly speaking'.
- quoting, i.e., indexing a stretch of discourse as someone else's speech by the formula *sagta* 'he/she said', as in *sagta: "du komm morgen!"* 'he said "you come tomorrow."'
- multiple discourse markers such as *moment ma'* 'just a minute' and *alles klar* 'everything's alright'. The target form *moment mal* serves to announce new aspects of a topic, indexing that an idea has suddenly occurred to the speaker and focussing the hearer's attention on the following speech segment. The learners use the phonologically reduced form *moment ma'* as a turnkeeping device, helping to bridge pauses in utterance planning. Cf. *Klasse sw/... Klasse ... Klasse ... moment ma Klasse drei und ... eins und aeh swei ...ne?* 'class tw/...s class... class ...wait a minute class three and ... one and uh two...right?'

Perhaps even more striking is the use of *alles klar* as a narrative device, as in this story telling sequence:

(5) L: undann Wohnungsam, ja, alles klar. Papiere alles klar. Pass, alles klar. Frau... undann, ja alles klar, ja, undann schreibn, ...komm, keine Wohnung, ama gans rigtig, Kollega, undann alles klar, Wohnung, ... weiss nicht ... immer kucken da, kucken, nix essen da ...komm da heute dr/halb swei Uhr ... komm, ...nix essen, imma Wohnung gucken. (And then housing office, okay, everything's alright, papers, everything's alright, passport, everything's alright, wife... and then, ok, everythings, alright, yes, and then write, ... come, no appartment, ... but quite true, mate, and then, everything's alright, apartment, ... don't know... always look around there, look, no eat there, ...come there today thr/half past one ...come, ...eat nothing, always look for apartment.' (p. 23)

In this story, *alles klar* functions as a generic substitute for specific rhematic units, complementing the specified theme. Its main narrative function is to indicate successfully completed past action, the specific nature of which is left to the hearer to elaborate.

The use of pragmatic routines in the Turkish learners' speech production suggests a number of things about the acquisition of pragmatic and linguistic competence by these immigrant workers. The observed formulae are frequent and salient in NS input. They are incorporated into the learners' interlanguage under partial reduction of their formal (syntactic and phonological) properties and expansion of their pragmatic and discourse functions. Some of these formulae, such as *ich bin...*, serve as sentence builders in the sense of Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), while other, such as *alles klar*, function to complete narrative units. In agreement with earlier studies on untutored L2 acquisition by immigrant workers (e.g., Meisel, 1977; Schumann, 1978), Rehbein surmises that in the institutional context of an industrial work place, migrants develop a repertoire of routinized fixed expressions for multiple purpose usage. Unlike L2 learners who acquire L2 in more favorable social settings, such as Hakuta's (1974) and Wong-Fillmore's (1976) subjects, it does not seem likely for these migrants to decompose their routinized utterance fragments into rule-based linguistic knowledge, nor to acquire target-like functions of these and other pragmatic formulae. More of the same communicative experience will not be very helpful for these learners to destabilize their fossilized interlanguage. Rehbein is optimistic, however, about possible benefits of L2 teaching, and indeed this optimism is supported by another study on the same population of immigrant workers (Barkowski, Harnisch, & Kumm, 1978).

CONCLUSION

The most striking contrast in Wildner-Bassett's (1984) and Rehbein's (1987b) findings is the highly successful - though not perfect - learning of a large variety of pragmatic formulae by the instructed middle-class foreign language learners and the very limited, non-targetlike multiple formulae which were the communicative resource in the pidginized IL-variety developed by the uninstructed migrant workers. One implication from these studies is that closer attention needs to be paid to the social context of L2 learning, and to the learning opportunities afforded by different environments of L2 acquisition. Extending the discussion again to indirectness in linguistic action, it would seem important to determine whether the context-sensitivity shown for the acquisition of pragmatic routine is also a central aspect in learners' use and understanding of indirection, and its development over time. For example, the foreign students examined by Bouton (1992) achieved remarkable skill in interpreting implicature through exposure only. Will learners in different social environments learn how to interpret implicatures just as successfully? Will learners in a socially comparable **foreign** language context become as good at inferencing pragmatic intent as their uninstructed counterparts? Takahashi and Beebe (1987) and Kitao (1990) suggest an advantage for Japanese ESL learners over EFL in speech act production and politeness assessment. It will be a task for future studies to determine the impact of a pure foreign language context on the acquisition of implicature in L2. Finally, in a second language environment, can natural acquisition of indirection be supported by instruction? Results of a recent study by Bouton (1994) are encouraging. It remains to be examined what instructional options are best suited to help students in different social environments and learning contexts improve their knowledge and skill in using routine and indirection efficiently in L2.

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FACE ORIENTATIONS IN REACTING TO ACCUSATORY COMPLAINTS: ITALIAN L_1, ENGLISH L_1, AND ITALIAN AS A COMMUNITY LANGUAGE

Marina Frescura

This article reports the findings of a study dealing with the linguistic behaviour of three groups of speakers in reacting to accusatory complaints:

(1) native speakers of Standard Italian (SI) residing in Italy;
(2) native speakers of Canadian English (CE) residing in Toronto;
(3) speakers of Italian residing in Toronto, first generation immigrants, defined as speakers of Italian as a Community Language (ICL).

The description of the linguistic and pragmatic behaviour of the SI and CE speakers was used to explain the ICL speakers' possible patterns of divergence from the native norm of Italy, and possible patterns of convergence toward the norm of their adopted country. The speakers' performance was analysed in the light of its positive or negative face-orientation, as well as in the light of a number of variables which included not only social distance and dominance, but also the tone of the complaint rated according to its weak or strong threat to the face of the complainee.

The findings have implications for research on speech act behaviour. New procedures are suggested for collecting and analysing speech act data with the goal to understand both the relationship between the preferred and dispreferred status of second components of an adjacency pair, and the face-orientation of a given speech community.

INTRODUCTION

This article reports on an investigation of the second component of the adjacency pair Accusatory Complaint - Reaction to Accusatory Complaint. This type of complaint is an act which constitutes an 'attack' on the face of complainees because it implies wrong doing of some sort on their part. For example, people may be: a) accused of something that they didn't do, b) accused of something that they did do, but that 'couldn't be helped', or c) accused in a sarcastic or offensive tone, or in such a way as to cause public embarrassment. Complainees may therefore react by admitting their own guilt (i.e., Apologizing), thus saving the face of the complainer, or by defending themselves, thus protecting their own face, in a number of ways: they may deny any responsibility, give an elaborate and compelling explanation for the infraction, express pride in themselves for being first-time offenders, or tell the complainers to control their temper. In order to communicate all the above 'feelings' (complaints and reactions to complaints belong to Searle's (1969) category of 'expressive' speech acts) speakers have to make use of linguistic strategies that allow them to state their case.

A classification of the strategies available to speakers when reacting to a complaint should therefore take into consideration the two aspects of 'face work' which stem either from the need or desire to protect the complainer's negative face (e.g., "I'm sorry/How clumsy of me/It's all my fault"), or from the need and desire to protect one's own positive face (e.g., "I had nothing to do with it/You know I am always punctual to meetings.., if I was late it means that it couldn't be helped/There is no need to shout.."). First and second language research has focussed to date only on the patterns of Apology in L_1 and L_2 in a number of languages, English being however the prevalent one. The existing literature (Owen, 1983; Cohen and Olshtain, 1981; Olshtain, 1983, 1989; Olshtain and Weinbach, 1986; Olshtain and Cohen, 1983, 1989; Blum-Kulka, 1984; Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989; Trosborg, 1987; Holmes, 1989, 1990; Vollmer and Olshtain, 1989) seems to confirm that, whatever the language, the Apology speech act is realized by the same universal set of semantic formulae which may be used with different frequencies and with varied intensity, depending on different social and contextual factors.

Although ground breaking for many aspects, these studies do have limitations in terms of research design (e.g., in the areas of selection of subjects, role-play procedure, contextual variables), as well as method of classification and analysis of the data. The aim of the study presented in this article is to address some of these methodological limitations, while at the same time investigating how reactions to accusatory complaints are realized by three groups of speakers whose sociopragmatic behaviour has not previously been described: native speakers of Italian, native speakers of Canadian English, and Italian-Canadians who speak Italian in the large community of post-war immigrants situated in Toronto.

METHODOLOGY

The Sample

There were 62 subjects in this study:

Speakers of Standard Italian (SI) residing in Italy: n = 22
Speakers of Standard Canadian English (CE) residing in Toronto: n = 20
Speakers of Italian as a Community Language (ICL)[1] residing in Toronto: n = 20

A written questionnaire was administered to all potential subjects to ensure that selection was done according to the same criteria in terms of age (between the age of 30 and 50), education (post-secondary), and sex (equal number of male and female subjects)[2]. In most research investigating speech act behaviour, the data for both L_1 and L_2 were elicited from college/university students in their early twenties. This is expected in the case of subjects who supply L_2 data, since it is in the language classrooms where one finds sizable samples of L_2 learners. However, for the purpose of obtaining a description of native speakers' behaviour, this practice yields information about the speech act behaviour of a very narrow segment of the L_1 speakers' population. In order to obtain a description of reactions to complaints representing a mature standard norm, the subjects providing the base for comparison in this study belonged to an older age bracket and were selected from a number of different professions. In the case of the speakers of Standard Italian, the selection of

subjects whose socio-economic status, by virtue of level of education and type of occupation, could be classified as middle class (Chambers and Trudgill, 1980), was of crucial importance. For speakers of this particular socio-economic status, in fact, Standard Italian is fairly uniformly spread across Italy's regions and the risk of running into dialectal differences is therefore highly reduced[3]. Once the selection of the subjects was completed, individual data-collecting sessions were set up for each subject with the investigator.

The Research Instrument

The role-play situations. The data were elicited through role-play enactments. The use of spontaneous speech data was not considered an option for this study since the nature of the act being investigated does not guarantee any spontaneous occurrence in settings where recording or logging is possible or acceptable. Reactions to complaints prove to be particularly difficult to tap ethnographically especially since complaints are so closely related to a number of factors which might not be known to the investigator, like the role-relationship between the complainer and the complainee, and the nature of the offence. For the investigation of this type of speech act, a carefully designed role-play instrument, although time consuming, offers the best approximation to real interaction while allowing for the control necessary in a cross-linguistic comparison.

The subjects were asked to enact a set of six role-play situations dealing with everyday circumstances with which speakers could easily identify, such as exchanges between parent and child, boss and employee, librarian and library user[4]. The texts of the English and Italian versions of the six situations are in the APPENDIX. Two situations, n. 3 and n. 4, were divided into two different sub-sets, version a) and version b), each corresponding to two different complaints. In one sub-set the complainer reacts to the infraction in a tolerant manner, in the other the complaint is delivered in a tone that may be interpreted as angry or sarcastically abrasive. The rationale for this aspect of the design is given in the next section.

The social and contextual variables embedded in the role-play situations. Each role-play situation varied according to two social factors, Dominance and Social Distance, representing the role relationship between the complainer and the complainee, and two contextual factors, Severity of offence and Tone of complaint. The behaviour of L_1 and L_2 speakers has previously been studied with respect to the role-relationship between the participants, and to the severity of the offence, but it has never been studied with respect to the variable of tone, even though it was included by Hymes (1972) in his acronym SPEAKING. The letter 'K ', in fact, refers to the 'key', namely the manner or the spirit in which the message is delivered. Since a complaint constitutes an attack to the complainee's positive face, the stronger the tone of the complaint appears to be, the more damaging the attack is to one's face. In the present study the tone of the accusation/complaint (Strong vs. Weak, that is aggressive, rude, sarcastic vs. rational, civilized, calm) was therefore taken into consideration as one of the crucial factors which, together with gravity of offence, status and social distance of the participants, can determine the complainee's choice of sociopragmatic behaviour.

Each of the four variable factors was expected to have significant effects on the realization patterns of reactions to accusatory complaints. The rating of the first two variables, Dominance and Social Distance, was done by the investigator. For the rating of the other two variables, Severity and Tone, given their much higher subjectivity, it was considered necessary to consult external raters. Five native speakers of Italian and five native speakers of English rated the Severity of the offence and the Tone of the accusation/complaint for each situation. The two sets of raters agreed on the Strong or Weak Tone of the accusation/complaint for all six situations, but they differed in their evaluation of High and Low Severity. Table 1 gives an overview of the six role-play situations in relations to the ratings of the four variables[5].

Table 1: Ratings of Social and Contextual Factors in Role-Play Situations

	Situation	Domin	Soc Dist	Severity IT/EN	Tone IT/EN
1:	person forgets meeting with friend	2	1	High/High	Weak/Weak
2:	parent cannot keep promise to a child	1	1	Low/High	Weak/Weak
3:	employee is late for meeting with boss	3	2	High/High	a: Strong/Strong b: Weak/Weak
4:	person bumps into lady at supermarket	2	3	Low/Low	a: Weak/Weak b: Strong/Strong
5:	driver backs into another car	2	3	Low/High	Strong/Strong
6:	person returns soiled book to library	2	3	Low/Low	Strong/Strong

Dominance: 1 Complainer < Complainee; 2 Complainer = Complainee; 2 Complainer > Complainee

Social Distance: 1 = friends/intimates; 2 = acquaintances; 3 = strangers

Severity: Low; High

Tone: Weak threat to the face of the complainee; Strong threat to the face of the complainee

The role-play procedure. One of the crucial aspects of the instrument design consisted of setting up the conditions for the role-play exchange. A typical role-play instrument has the following set-up: a) subjects read both the context of each situation and the complaint-stimulus from a card; b) the investigator performs the relevant stimulus; c) subjects react to the stimulus. This type of protocol, fairly simple from a practical and technical point of view, presents two serious problems. The first one has to do with possible, albeit unwanted, variations in the repetitions of the same stimulus on the part of the investigator, which make the instrument highly unreliable. In order to ensure that complaints were identical not only in lexical terms, but also in terms of tone, pitch, voice quality, loudness and so forth, the subjects in this study were asked to react to pre-taped stimuli prepared for this purpose, rather than to the live voice of the investigator. Moreover, the texts with the explanation of each situation were also taped so that each stimulus would not be played in a vacuum, but rather as a follow-up to the text with the description of the

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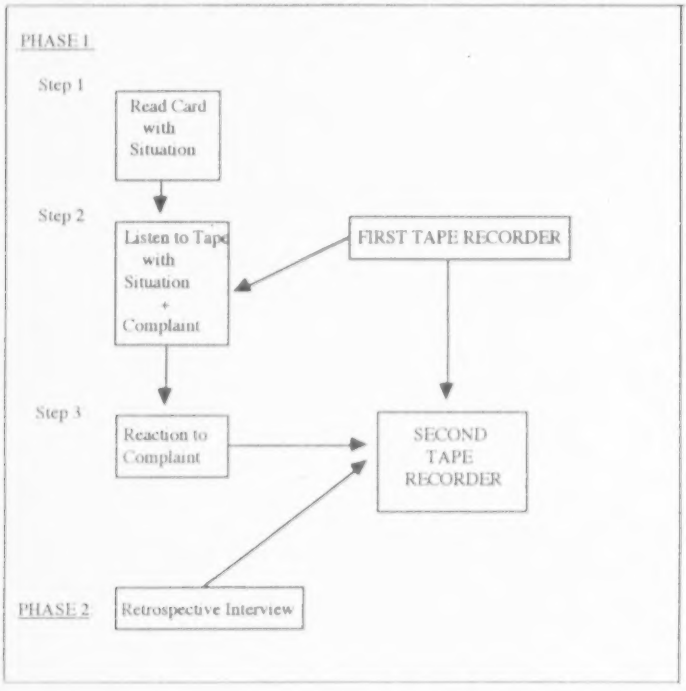
setting. The recordings were made by native speakers of Italian and native speakers of English[6]. Separate tapes were prepared for each language. In order to avoid the introduction of an unwanted variable to the study (i.e., linguistic behaviour influenced by the sex of the complainer), all the speakers who performed the stimuli were female. The second problem has to do with the fact that in typical role-play instruments the subjects are given the text of the complaint together with the context of the situation, thus making the actual role-play exchange even more artificial. The role-play procedure in the present study was therefore designed to ensure that the conditions of the exchange were as close as possible to those of naturally occurring interaction. The text of the complaint, therefore, was not written on the card, and the subjects had to react to the pre-taped "surprise stimulus" without any previous knowledge of its content.

After each role-play enactment was completed, the subjects listened to their performance in all six situations. Immediately after, with the tape recorder in 'record' mode, they were asked by the investigator to comment informally on their behaviour: i.e., on their attitude toward the dominance, or lack of it, of the complainer, on their sensitivity to the severity of the offence and to the tone of the complaint, and (for the Italian as a Community Language subjects) on their possible linguistic difficulties. These retrospective interviews were carried out with the goal of gaining further insights into the subjects' rationale for the selection of a specific behaviour. Figure 1 summarises the various steps of the role-play procedure.

Figure 1: Summary of role-play procedure



Analysis of the Data

The Formulae: semantic classification. The data obtained indicated that reactions to accusatory complaints can be performed using one or more of seven semantic formulae. Five of these formulae coincide with the ones included by Cohen and Olshtain (1981) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983) in the Apology Speech Act Set:

(1) Apology: "I am sorry/ I apologize"
(2) Acceptance of Responsibility: "It's my fault"
(3) Explanation: "There was an accident/I had an important meeting"
(4) Repair: "I'll pay for it"
(5) Promise of Forbearance: "It will not happen again"

The classification for the present study includes two more formulae:

(6) Denial: "I didn't do it/ It's not my fault/It's his fault"

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This formula, although identified by Olshtain and Cohen was not included as part of the Apology Speech Act Set since it is produced when the speaker chooses not to apologize.

(7) Expression of Appeal: "Try to understand../It could happen to anybody../There is no need to be rude../I always keep my promises..".

The Expression of Appeal is a new formula[7] which emerged from the data of the present study. With an 'expression of Appeal' the transgressor appeals to the offended party's understanding, leniency in judging the infraction, and self-control. Three sub-formulae have been identified:

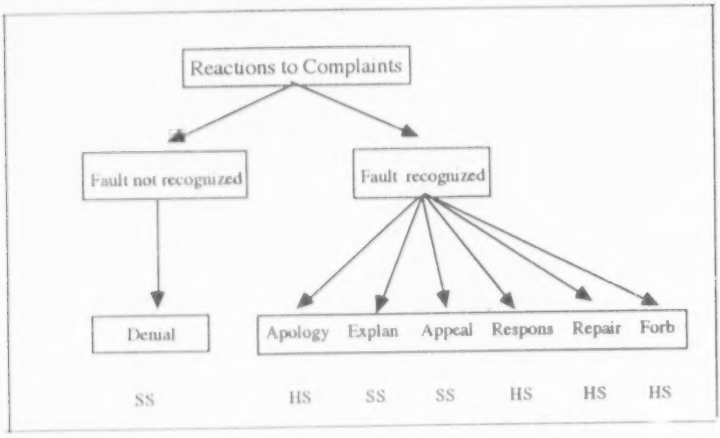
a) Appeal to Understanding: "I hope you will understand"
"You know how it is.."
"Sometimes these things happen.."

b) Appeal to Leniency: "Usually I am never late"
"I never missed a meeting before"

c) Appeal to Self-Control: "Relax"
"There is no need to shout!"

The formulae: face-saving classification. The classification of the seven formulae according to their semantic load, although indispensable for the analysis of the data of the present study, gives only a partial view of speaker behaviour. Each formula, in fact, in addition to its semantic load, also carries one of two face-saving functions, which are here defined as Hearer-Supportive and Self-Supportive according to their different face-saving target. We define as Hearer-Supportive (HS) formulae the ones used when complainees choose to support the face of the complainer by admitting their own guilt, by recognizing the complainer's rights, by offering compensation. The formulae of Apology, Responsibility, Repair, and Forbearance are, therefore, HS formulae. We define as Self-Supportive (SS) formulae the ones used when complainees choose to support their own face by denying guilt, by appealing to the complainer's leniency, by providing an explanation for the offence. The formulae of Denial, Explanation, and Appeal have been classified as SS formulae. Figure 2 presents an overall view of the semantic and face-saving classification.

Figure 2: Overview of classification of formulae



HS = Hearer Supportive
SS = Self-Supportive

Statistical analyses. A series of MANOVAS were carried out to explore differences between and within groups as well as interactions between groups, sex, and the four social and contextual variables. In those instances where the MANOVAS indicated significant differences, follow-up analyses were performed, using the Tukey's Studentized Range Test for between-group comparisons, and the Repeated Measures ANOVA for within-group comparisons. The differences between the two versions (a. and b.) of situations 3 and 4 were explored with a Chi-square analysis. Table 2 presents a synopsis of the research design.

Table 2: Summary of Research Design

Independent variables	Levels		Dependent variables
Dominance	1-2-3	within-subjects factors	HS production
Social Dist.	1-2-3		SS production
Severity	Low/High		
Tone	Weak/Strong		
Group	SI, CE, ICL	between-subjects factors	
Sex	F, M		

RESULTS

Hearer-Supportive (HS) Formulae: Quantitative Results

The results of the statistical analyses indicated that there was no significant difference between the Standard Italian (SI) and the Canadian English (CE) speakers, as well as between the SI and the Italian as a Community Language speakers (ICL), in the production of Hearer-Supportive (HS) formulae. The CE speakers, however, produced overall significantly more HS formulae than the ICL speakers (difference at $p < .05$). With respect to the levels of the four contextual variables, SI speakers indicated that they were sensitive to Social Distance and Tone by producing more HS formulae with friends/intimates than with strangers (difference at $p < .01$), and when the Tone of the complaint was weak rather than strong (difference at $p < .01$). The ICL speakers showed sensitivity to Social Distance but, unlike the SI speakers, produced more HS formulae with strangers than with friends/intimates (difference at $p < .05$). They also showed sensitivity to Severity and produced more HS formulae when they perceived that the severity of the offence was high rater than low (difference at $p < .0001$). The Canadian English (CE) speakers did not show any significant difference in relation to contextual variables for HS formulae production. With respect to the sex of the subjects, female subjects produced overall significantly more HS formulae than male subjects (difference at $p < .05$) across the three language groups. Summaries of results are in Table 3 and Table 4 (see section on Self-Supportive (SS) Formulae: Quantitative Results).

Hearer-Supportive (HS) Formulae: Qualitative Results

The data indicated that the speakers of the three groups used the same set of four Hearer-Supportive formulae: Apology, acceptance of Responsibility, offer of Repair, promise of Forbearance. The frequency with which the formulae were used varied from group to group, and from one situation to another. The promise of Forbearance was used very little in general and mostly in situations 1 and 3 (person is late for meeting with friend and boss). There were qualitative differences with respect to the range of expressions used to perform the other three HS formulae. It was found that the CE speakers, although producing overall more Apology formulae than the SI speakers, used only four expressions:

"I am sorry" (very/so/really/terribly/awfully...)
"Sorry about that"
"I apologize"
"Forgive me"

The speakers of Standard Italian (SI), although apologizing with less frequency, used a much larger and more diversified repertoire of apologies:

"Mi spiace/dispiace" (*I am sorry*)
"Sono desolato/mortificato/spiacente" (*I am mortified*)
"Non ho parole per scusarmi" (*I have no words to express how sorry I am...*)
"Mi scuso" (*I apologize*)
"Le/Ti chiedo scusa" (*I request your forgiveness*)

"Non posso che scusarmi" (*I cannot do anything else except apologize*)
"Mi scusi/scusami/mi perdoni/perdonami (*Forgive me*)
"La/Ti prego di scusarmi" (*I beg you to forgive me*)[8]

The SI speakers therefore indicated that they have at their disposal a whole range of different expressions, from bland to melodramatic, to express different degrees of intensity, while the CE speakers intensified Apology formulae by adding an adverb to the prevalently used "I am sorry". The ICL speakers also proved to be very limited in the range of their Apology expressions. They used mostly "Mi dispiace" (49.37%) which translates literally the English expression "I am sorry" and presents the advantage of not requiring the speakers to change its form from formal to familiar (the tu/lei distinction parallel to the tu/vous in French). When the expression "scusa/scusi" (the most common with the SI speakers) was used, the wrong tu/lei form was selected 60% of the times. The formula of Responsibility was realized in similar ways by the three samples, but differences were found between male and female subjects across the three groups. In recognizing their guilt, the female subjects had a tendency to use self-derogatory expressions with high frequency than male as it can be seen from the following expressions:

CE female speakers
"I feel like such a klutz"
"Excuse my clumsiness"
"I guess I was blind, today"
"I should have been more careful"
"I cannot believe that I have done it again"

SI female speakers
"Sono proprio sbadata" (*I am really forgetful*)
"Lo sai che sono una pasticciona" (*You know that I am messy*)
"Ormai penso che tu mi conosca.. dimentico le cose.." (*By now you should know me... I forget about things...*)
"Andavo in giro come un' oca" (*I was going around like a silly goose*)

ICL female speakers
"Purtroppo forse la mia memoria è partita" (*Unfortunately, I am afraid that also my memory is gone*)
"Sono un po' distratta oggi" (*I am a bit careless today*)
"Oh, mio dio, un'altra volta!" (*Oh, my god, I have done it again!*)

The qualitative analysis of the data also revealed interesting differences between the three groups of speakers in the realization patterns of the HS formula 'offer of Repair' particularly in situations 5 (parking lot). The speakers of Standard Italian, who perceived this offence as having low Severity, although annoyed by the tone of the driver of the other car ("Ma è cieco? Guardi che cosa ha combinato!"/*Are you blind?! Look what you' have done!*), were very careful in admitting responsibility and delegated to their insurance company the task of dealing with the problem:

"Beh, non si tratta di essere ciechi, purtroppo un errore può succedere, ecco gli estremi della mia assicurazione"
(*It is not a matter of being blind, anyone can make a mistake, here is my insurance number*)
"Ci penserà la mia assicurazione.. è un inconveniente.." (*My insurance will deal with it,... it is nothing serious...*)
"Io sono assicurata, le assicuro che il suo danno verrà pagato" (*I am insured, I assure you that you will be reimbursed*)

The Canadian English speakers, instead, in line with their perception of this offence as having high Severity (see Table 1), recognized their fault more readily than the Italian speakers, and offered a less business-like type of Repair:

"Let's sit down and talk about this, and let's get organized and write down each other's name and insurance number..."
"Let's look at the insurance and we'll straighten this out.."
"Here is my insurance number, we'll get it fixed up.."
"Why don't you show me what happened and we'll look after it..".

This latter set of utterances shows the English speakers behaving as 'participants' to the repair process ("let's," "we'll"), while the previous set of utterances shows the Italian speakers behaving as 'spectators' who protect their own face by distancing themselves from the event.

The ICL speakers differed from both the SI and the CE speaker in their formulation of offers of Repair with respect to the same situation. Of the subjects who offered some sort of compensation for the damages (75%), only a small number (4%) proposed to go through official channels, namely calling the police or the insurance company. The remainder of the subjects proposed a 'private settlement', either implicitly or explicitly:

"Pago tutto il danno/Quello che è pago" (*I'll pay for the damages/Whatever it is I'll pay*)
"Quello che si deve pagare lei mi fa sapere" (*Let me know what I have to pay*)
"Sono proposta a dargli un ricompenso*9 di questo danno/"Le faccio* una compensazione*" (*I am ready to give you compensation*)
"Le do il mio numero e ci mettiamo d'accordo" (*I'll give you my number and we'll reach an agreement*)

How can this behaviour be explained? The more readily available explanation is that perhaps the decision to opt for a 'private settlement' is just a reflection of this particular group of subjects' desire to avoid the hassle of having to pay a higher insurance premium. If this were the case, it would still have to be explained why this group of speakers opted for this behaviour with higher frequency than the SI (10.52%) and the CE (11.76%) speakers. Another possible explanation can be found in the particular background of the ICL speakers. Research on post-war Italian immigration in Canada, indicates that the immediate needs of the immigrant population were to find work and provide for their families. These needs translated into keeping a low profile, trying at all costs not to run into problems with

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the 'authorities' who had the power of giving them work but also the power of "sending them back" (Harney, 1978; Sturino, 1981; Zucchi, 1988; Bagnell, 1989). The ICL subjects, all born or raised in Toronto from a very early age, may have absorbed this type of self-protecting behaviour from their parents. At this point, if this explanation is considered acceptable, it would be interesting to observe how the ICL speakers realize this type of Repair in English. In these circumstances, do they switch to 'English rules', thereby showing a duality of language and culture, or do they adhere to the rules of the Italian Community in Toronto, thus revealing that the need to 'belong', and 'to be accepted' is still there after one generation?

Self-Supportive (SS) Formulae: Quantitative Results

The results of the statistical analyses indicated that the speakers of Standard Italian produced overall more Self-Supportive (SS) formulae (Denial, Explanation, and Appeal) than the Canadian English (CE) speakers and the Italian as a Community Language (ICL) speakers (difference at $p < .05$). None of the three language groups showed significant differences in production of Self-Supportive formulae according to the various levels of each variable. Female speakers produced overall more SS formulae with friends/intimates and acquaintances than with strangers, while male speakers produced more SS formulae with friends/intimates than with acquaintances (both differences at $p < .01$). Summaries of the results are in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3: Summary of main effects of group, sex, and interactions of sex x level of variable for production of HS and SS formulae

Overall	HS	SS
group	CE>ICL	SI>CE , ICL
sex	F > M	0
sex x dominance	0	0
sex x social distance	0	F = 1,2 > 3 M = 1 > 3
sex x severity	0	0
sex x tone	0	0

F= female, M = male
0 = no significant effect
> = larger than

Social distance: 1= friends/intimates
2= acquaintances
3= strangers

Table 4: Summary of interactions of group x level of variable for production of HS and SS formulae

Variable	Group	HS	SS
Dominance	SI	0	0
	CE	0	0
	ICL	0	0
Social Distance	SI	1>3	0
	CE	0	0
	ICL	3>1,2	0
Severity	SI	0	0
	CE	0	0
	ICL	high > low	0
Tone	SI	weak>strong	0
	CE	0	0
	ICL	0	0

Dominance: 1= complainer lower than, 2=equal to, 3=higher than complainee
Social Distance: 1= friends/intimates, 2=acquaintances, 3=strangers
0 = no significant effect
> = larger than

Self-Supportive (SS) Formulae: Qualitative Results

A qualitative analysis of the data revealed that, in addition to the documented quantitative differences, the SI, CE, and ICL speakers also differed in the realization patterns of the Explanation, Appeal, and Denial formulae in some of the role-play situations. For example, in situation 2 (reacting to the complaint of the child) the Canadian English speakers offered general and broad explanations:

"There was something that required my attention"
"Right now I have to attend to these matters"
"This is something I cannot get out of"

while the Standard Italian speakers made an attempt at being more specific:

"Mi hanno telefonato dall'ufficio e non posso proprio mancare.." (*They called me from the office and I have to show up...*)
"Non pensavo di dovermi fermare a scuola ancora per un'ora..." (*I didn't think I would have to stay in school for another hour..*)
"Ho avuto degli impegni molto, molto urgenti..." (*There was something very, very urgent that I had to do..*)

Once more in situation 3 the CE speakers (regardless of the tone of the boss) offered perfunctory, general, and impersonal explanations:

"It was just one of those things"
"Something came up.."
"My car broke down"
"I got stuck in traffic"
"I was needed at home"
"I got held up"

while in the same situation, the SI speakers (also regardless of the tone of the boss) produced more detailed and personalized accounts:

"C'è stato un incidente sull'autostrada e ho dovuto fermarmi" (*There was an accident on the highway and I had to stop*)
"C'era una persona malata che doveva essere accompagnata al pronto soccorso" (*There was a sick person who had to be taken to the emergency*)
"Purtroppo avevo il bambino che non stava bene.." (*Unfortunately my child was not feeling well*)

The ICL speakers displayed linguistic difficulties resulting in lack of diversification:

"Ho dimenticato" (*I forgot*)
"Sono stata molto occupata al lavoro" (*I have been very busy at work*)
"Avevo tante cose da fare" (*I had many things to do*)

For the formula of Appeal, the SI speakers produced a broader repertoire of sub-formulae than the CE speakers. For example in situation 2 (child complaining to parent), the SI speakers used the Appeal formula to give a mini-lecture on duties and responsibilities:

"Tu sai benissimo che ci sono dei doveri ..che si devono osservare" (*You know very well that certain obligations have to be met...*)
"Non sempre si può avere quello che si vuole nella vita.." (*One cannot always have what one wants from life...*)
"Purtroppo gli impegni di lavoro sono inderogabili" (*Unfortunately business engagements cannot be postponed*)

In situation 3 the Appeal formula was used by the SI speakers to remind the complainer (the boss) of the rarity of the occurrence:

"In genere, se prometto qualcosa cerco di mantenerlo..." (*Usually when I make a promise I try to keep it..*)
"Sono abituato a rispettare sempre i miei impegni" (*I am always used to meet my obligations*)
D'accordo, sono arrivato in ritardo, però è un caso del tutto eccezionale.' (*Yes, I was late, but there were exceptional circumstances*)

In situation 5, (parking lot) the formula of Appeal was used by the SI speakers to elicit understanding:

"Una cosa del genere può capitare a tutti." (*It can happen to anybody*)

but mostly to elicit self-control:

"Non c'è bisogno di urlare.." (*There is no need to shout*)
"Ma, abbia pazienza.." (*Well, try to be tolerant...*)

The Appeal formulae produced by the CE speakers, instead, were less diversified across the six role-play situations than those produced by the SI speakers and were for the most part aimed at obtaining the complainer's understanding:

"Try to understand.."
"You know these things happen"
"All I ask you to do is try to understand.."
"I mean... everybody make mistakes..".

The Italian as a Community Language speakers, though using a reduced range of expressions, showed a behaviourial 'melange', consisting of convergence toward the English norm as well as maintenance of the Italian norm. For situation 2, for example, (not being able to keep a promise to one's child), they talked about duties and responsibilities as the SI speakers did:

"Lo sai che quando si è medici bisogna fare dei sacrifici" (*You know that when one is a doctor one must make some sacrifices*)
"La mamma ha delle responsabilitá che non può rimandare" (*Mommy has some responsibility that she can't postpone*)

while at the same time resorting to general requests for understanding and self-control, as the CE speakers did:

"Sono cose che succedono" (*These things can happen*)
"No, non sono cieca...."(*No, I am not blind..*)
"Non è necessario essere così sarcastici.. (*It is not necessary to be so sarcastic..*)

While the Appeal and Explanation formulae were distributed across the six role-play situations, the formula of Denial, for contextual reasons, was mostly used in situation 6 (librarian complains that a damaged book has been returned). The native speakers of Italian produced a wider range of sub-formulae than the native speakers of English to deny the irresponsibility for the infraction:

"Io non sono stato" (*It wasn't me*)
"Non è colpa mia" (*It's not my fault*)
"Non ritengo/non credo di averlo sporcato io" (*I don't think I dirtied the book*)
"Io non ho rovesciato niente..." (*I did not spill anything...*)

"A me non risulta.." (*I don't think so..*)
"Sono certo di non avergli rovesciato niente addosso" (*I am sure I didn't spill anything on it..*)

or to blame another library user for the damage:

"L'ho trovato cosí" (*I found it that way*)
"Era già così" (*That's the way it was*)
"È sicura che non fosse sporco già prima?" (*Are you sure it was not dirty before?*)
"Ma.. qui.. era già sporco prima..." (*But...here.. it was already dirty before..*)
"Mi è stato consegnato così." (*I received it that way*)
"Sarà stato qualcun altro....." (*It must have been someone else...*)

and even to blame the librarian for not doing her work properly:

"Probabilmente me l'ha dato già sporco.." (*You probably gave it to me already dirty*)
"Vuole dire che lei non ha controllato bene un'altra persona.."
(*What it means is that you didn't check carefully another person*)
"Lei non si ricorda [di avermelo dato già sporco].. stia più attenta!"
(*You do not remember [that you gave me a damaged book] Be more careful!*)

The CE speakers repeated in various ways that they had nothing to do with the damaged book:

"I didn't spill anything on it"
"I have no idea what happened"
"I certainly didn't ruin it myself"

and only in few instances they attempted, albeit indirectly, to blame another library user for the damage:

"It was that way when I took it out"
"That's the way it came.. sorry.."

The Italian Canadian speakers had a much more reduced range of expressions of Denial than the Standard Italian speakers and showed similarities with the Canadian English speakers by limiting their selection to two types of sub-formulae: denying their own involvement or blaming indirectly someone else. The formula of Denial, more than the others, showed a high percentage of repetitions occurring in the same utterance, as for example in: "I don't think I did that... I am pretty sure it might have been there before, because.. I don't know... I don't recall spilling anything..". If higher number of repetitions are equated with higher intensity, as suggested by Vollmer and Olshtain (1989), then the SI subjects in situation 6 produced more intense Denial than the CE subjects, since 50% of the native speakers of Italian produced two or three formulae of Denial in the same utterance, while only 28.57% of the CE speakers did so. The ICL speakers' performance was similar

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to that of the SI speakers. In situation 6, in fact, 40% of the ICL subjects produced the formula of Denial two or three times in the same utterance.

From a qualitative point of view there were no major gender differences in the way the formulae of Denial and Appeal were realized across the three language groups. The formula of Explanation, instead, presented the following differences: the female subjects, showing an overall tendency toward a 'personal' type of explanation, were the only ones to produce formulae dealing with family matters, personal illnesses, and children needing care and attention: "My child was sick/I was needed at home/ I had to go to a funeral", while the male subjects opted for the 'external' cause: "There was an accident/Traffic was bad/The previous meeting finished late".

Retrospective Interviews

The speakers of Canadian English revealed that, contrary to the results of the quantitative analyses, they were indeed sensitive to Dominance, Severity of the offence and Tone of the complaint. In fact, fifty per cent of the subjects admitted that they were sensitive to a complainer with higher status and said that in situation 3 (late for a meeting) they apologized, regardless of the tone of the complaint, because they "had to, it was the boss, so..". They also said that they apologized when they felt it justified by the infraction: "Well ...it was pretty bad, and if I did actually do it, than it is my fault and I should apologize", and that "when you let someone down" it is necessary to apologize. In the retrospective interviews a large number of CE subjects (52.38%) also admitted, albeit indirectly, of being sensitive to Tone by reporting that when someone is aggressive or rude, as the boss in situation 3, they chose to "back down" because "to react back irritates the whole situation and makes it worse", and it would mean "lowering myself to their level". Therefore "the only thing to do is to defuse the situation" by being even more apologetic, because "it's a strategy, not to get upset". For example, in situation 4, where the lady in the supermarket reacted loudly, a few informants admitted that they were irritated by the tone because "after all it was an accident", but apologized and offered to pick up the packages because "she was loud and everyone could hear". This desire, on the part of the CE speakers, to avoid unnecessary conflicts reaches its highest point in situation 6, where the librarian accused the library user of returning a damaged book. In reacting to the librarian's accusation, three subjects, although denying of having spilled anything on the book, offered to pay for the damages just the same. Asked about the reasons for this behaviour, one subject eloquently summarized it by saying that she offered to pay for the damages "because the cost of replacing a book, wouldn't be worth a real battle".

The comments made by the CE subjects in the retrospective interviews proved, therefore, to be very useful for the interpretation of the results, since they brought to light the fact that the even distribution of HS formulas by the CE speakers was not the result of their lack of sensitivity to social or contextual factors, but it was rather the outcome of carefully premeditated and planned strategic behaviour. As for gender differences, their comments revealed that a large percentage of subjects (42.85%) were sensitive to the sex of the complainer for situations 3 (the boss) and 5 (the parking lot). Of this group, the male subjects said that they would have been kinder with a female interlocutor, while the comments of the female subjects indirectly suggested the opposite:

"With a man I would have been a little more intimidated, because I have never had the experience of working with men"
"I might have been more humorous with a man...because generally I can relate much better with men... and I can make heavy situations lighter.."
"To a man I would have offered more explanations.."
"I would have been less nervous with a man... I do not like women bosses because they are more domineering.."

The speakers of Standard Italian (SI) in the retrospective interviews confirmed the results of the quantitative analyses with respect to their reactions to the Tone of the accusatory complaint. Fourteen subjects out of twenty-two admitted that they reacted "al contenuto e al comportamento, non alla posizione degli altri" (*to content and behaviour, not to the status of others*) and stated that "secondo come mi trattano io reagisco" (*I react according to the way I am treated*), since "quello che mi da piú fastidio di tutto é proprio il tono, ancora piú della sostanza.." (*what annoys me more than anything is the tone, even more than the "substance"*). A few subjects, however, admitted that "Nell'ambito del lavoro, lo status conta, nell'ambiente non di lavoro dipende dal tono della persona" (*In the work place status is important, outside the work place it all depends on the tone of the person*) and that in the case of the boss "ho dovut o frenare la mia reazione" (*it was necessary to tone down my reaction*). The last two statements are in contradiction with the quantitative results which show that the Dominance factor did not have any effect on the performance of the SI speakers.

Only a small percentage of native speakers of Italian (22.73%) commented that, had the complainer been male, they would have reacted differently in situations 3 (the boss) and 5 (the parking lot). Of this small group, both male and female subjects said that they would have been less kind and more direct with a male interlocutor (examples 1 and 2 come from male subjects, examples 3 and 4 from females):

(1) "Con un uomo sarei stato piú brusco" (*With a man I would have been harsher..*)
(2) "Con un uomo sarei stato un po' piú duro,.. forse da un uomo penso di dovermi difendere di piú.. io normalmente non percepisco le donne come aggressive.."(*With a man I would have been harder..maybe because I expect that with a man I have to be more defensive...I normally do not perceive women to be aggressive..*)
(3) "Forse sarei stata meno gentile con l'automobilista uomo...con una donna c'é piú solidarietá.. un po' meno prevenzione..." (*Maybe I would have been less kind with a male driver.. with a woman there is more solidarity.. I am less biased..*)
(4) "Forse un a voce femminile mi dá piú sicurezza" (*Maybe a female voice reassures m morè..*)

In the retrospective interviews, the Italian as a Community Language (ICL) subjects' comments were in line with the quantitative results which indicate sensitivity to the Severity of the infraction and lack of sensitivity for the Dominance of the complainee. As for the variable of Tone, a different picture emerged. Some of the subjects (30%) declared that they

were indeed sensitive to Tone in the same way the native speakers of Italian were, as it is evident from some of their comments: "se qualcuno diventa un po' troppo aggressivo, finisco di essere un gentiluomo e divento piú aggressivo di lui.." (*when someone becomes too aggressive, I stop being a gentleman and I become even more aggressive..*), " .. io soprattutto reagisco al tono.." (*I mainly react to the tone..*) , "Ci sono delle volte in cui tutto dipende dal modo in cui la gente si comporta..(*There are times when everything depends on the way people behave..*). A much larger number of subjects (70%), although declaring that they were not sensitive to the Tone of the complaint, indirectly admitted the opposite. In their comments, which were very similar to those of the CE speakers, they reported that they had a tendency to "defuse an aggressive speaker", "to avoid confrontation", in order "to prevent the situation from deteriorating". As was the case for the CE speakers, the comments made by the ICL subjects in the retrospective interviews revealed that they were indeed sensitive to the Tone of the complaint and that their linguistic behaviour was the outcome of a deliberate strategy.

A large number of ICL speakers (47.37%) declared to be sensitive to the gender of the complainer. The comments made by the male speakers were in line with what was said by the SI and the CE male speakers, namely that they perceived themselves as being kinder with women than with other men. One subject recognized that his reactions would have been "not different but stronger " with a male interlocutor, and another one said that the situations were "slightly unrealistic, because I associate more with men than with women". Two male subjects were caught by surprise in situation 1, when they discovered that the friend whom they had to meet was female: "All my friends are male", or "I had to pretend I was still a university student". The comments made by the female subjects were varied. Some female subjects said that they resented a rude female interlocutor because between women there should be a sort of bond, a few were surprised that the "boss" was actually a woman, others said that they would have "reacted differently with a man" by trying "to raise the level of her answers" and by trying "to be humorous". Only two said that they would have been "more aggressive" with a man in the car accident situation.

The comments made in the retrospective interviews contributed a great deal to the understanding of the behaviour of the three language groups, in particular of the ICL speakers. This group of subjects, although required to use only Italian in the role-plays, were allowed to choose the language they felt more comfortable with for the retrospective interviews. The result was that almost all the subjects alternated between the two languages, often interspersing the Italian narrative with English words, sometimes in a conscious way, "I can't say this in Italian..." or "I'd better say it in English", often switching from one language to another[10] for entire sentences without any warning. They all acknowledged their limitations in Italian, by saying in various ways that they felt that the use of Italian restricted their performance: "in English I would have said more", "my reactions would have been longer". A few subjects said that they "didn't want to make mistakes" and others said that in their reactions they took "a non committal kind of stand because I didn't feel at ease with the language" or they felt 'flat' because of the language, "If I am angry I'd show it... in Italian I am more neutral". This confirms what Harder (1975) and Thomas (1983) call the "severely circumscribed role" of the foreigner who, no longer able to express strong opinions, seems condemned to a "reduced personality" in the second language. Having to struggle through every role-play exchange was not only a frustrating experience from a

linguistic point of view, but also a powerful reminder of the ongoing loss of their language and culture as a result of the ICL community's assimilation into their adopted country. The ICL subjects' performance, however, was more diversified in situations which revolved around the domain of family and friends, with whom they would be more likely to use Italian, than in those situations in which they would almost certainly use English.

CONCLUSION

This article proposed a description of Reactions to Accusatory Complaints as performed in three language varieties: Standard Italian, Canadian English, and the variety of Italian spoken in Toronto by first generation Italian-Canadians. The data, elicited through a set of role-play enactments, were coded according to a taxonomy comprising seven semantic formulae grouped under two super-ordinate categories: Hearer-Supportive, including those formulae providing gratification and support for the face of the complainers, and Self-Supportive, including those formulae uttered when speakers choose to protect their own face.

The major findings, seen in light of a universal theory of politeness, suggest that speakers of Standard Italian have an overall preference for the Self-Supportive category of formulae, while the speakers of Canadian English have a more pronounced tendency toward the Hearer-Supportive ones. In Brown and Levinson's (1978) terminology, therefore, the Canadian English speakers displayed a negative-politeness orientation, since they had a more marked preference than the Standard Italian group toward strategies which protect the complainers' negative face. The speakers of Standard Italian, instead, had a more marked preference toward strategies which protect their own positive face, just as Brown and Levinson would expect from cultures with a positive-politeness orientation. Ironically, the 'considered toward others' behaviour preferred by the Canadian English speakers turns out to be advantageous for their own face, since they are generally stereotyped as being controlled, polite, calm. The self-protective behaviour of the Standard Italian speakers, instead, turns out to be disadvantageous for their face, as they are usually stereotyped as rude and volatile by speakers of other languages.

The findings pertaining to the Italian Canadian speakers, although indicating linguistic and pragmatic convergence toward English, also point to language maintenance. This corroborates the findings of Tannen (1981, 1982) who, in her study of Greek-Americans' speech behaviour found that the ancestral language emerged not only in their phonology and syntax, but also in their sociolinguistic patterns even when the original language was completely lost. The linguistic and pragmatic competence of the Italian-Canadian speakers can be described in terms of a reversed transitional competence (Corder, 1967), best defined as **attritional competence**. While the first term refers to the interim competence of L_2 learners in their journey along the interlanguage continuum, the second term is here used for the first time to define the Italian Canadian speakers' gradual journey toward language loss.

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NOTES

[1]I choose the term "community language" (Tosi 1985, 1986) rather than "heritage language" since it best describes the position of a language spoken outside the country by a group of immigrants (i.e., Italian spoken in Canada) in relation to the norm spoken by those residing in the country (i.e., Italian spoken in Italy).

"In Canada, the two terms 'native languages' and 'heritage languages' (formerly 'ancestral') are still currently used to designate all non-official languages. The former refers to Amerindian and Inuit languages, whilst the latter names all the languages spoken by immigrant groups except French and English (Cummins, 1983; Allen and Swain, 1984); however, in one recent study 'heritage' has been occasionally replaced by 'community' (Cummins, 1984)." (Tosi, 1986, p. 4). "The concept of 'community language' is tightly connected with that of language maintenance", that is the phenomenon of "adults" language retention and their ability to transmit the minority language to the next generation " (Tosi, 1986, p. 6). Tosi recognizes that there is a discrepancy between the minority children's competence in the home language and that of their monolingual contemporaries speaking in the family the same language spoken outside (i.e., in the country of origin of parents and grandparents) due to a variety of conditions: a) the facilities for language retention by parents and relations; b) the presence outside the home of a different language used for work and social interaction which may also affect the home language used by the child's caretakers; c) the impact of the outside language which may reach children directly via media and siblings during their first socialization (Tosi, 1986, p. 5-6).

[2]The questionnaire was also designed to ensure the following: i) for the speakers of Canadian English (CE), that the subjects' parents were also native speakers of English to ensure that their English performance would not be influenced, either culturally or linguistically, by another language they might have learned as children. The particular composition of Toronto's multicultural population made this criterion necessary; ii) for the Speakers of Italian as a Community Language (ICL) it was necessary to confirm that the subjects selected were either born in Toronto of immigrant Italian parents or had immigrated from Italy before attending school.

[3]An impressive number of publications (Migliorini, 1967; Altieri-Biagi, 1978; Devoto, 1979; Simone, 1975; Sabatini, 1981; Beccaria, 1988; to name just a few) give an account of how the Italian literary language, written and spoken by few until the last century, has become the "language of all Italians" in little over one hundred years of national unity (1861). With this linguistic unification, brought about by compulsory education, the influence of national radio and television, and the media in general, the regional dialects have lost their position of prominence, yielding to a situation in which the majority of the population knows both Standard Italian and, in some cases only passively, a regional dialect.

[4]In order to ensure that subjects would not become mechanical in their reactions, three additional role-play situations, aimed at eliciting speech acts other than Reactions to Complaints (namely Congratulating, Thanking, Reassuring), were introduced as distractors.

[5]Situations 4, 5, and 6 were set-up with similar social factors, Dominance and Social Distance, to study further the realization of reactions to complaints between strangers. A pilot study conducted in preparation for the present investigation, indicated that native speakers of Italian were particularly sensitive to the tone of the complaint when the person issuing it was a stranger with equal dominance. It was therefore deemed necessary to use more than one situation with this particular role-relationship between the complainer and the complainee.

[6]Since it was important to ensure that the Italian and the English stimuli were enacted with equivalent tone, two additional native speakers of Italian and two additional native speakers of English (with similar age and socio-economic status to those of the subjects) were consulted. As a result of their feedback, two stimuli were modified and re-taped.

[7]Andrew Cohen (personal communication), informs me that his own Hebrew and American English data show the presence of utterances of the "Appeal" type. They were classified as general comments, however, and were not identified as part of the Apology speech acts set.

[8]The English translation may not always convey the same illocutionary force of the Italian text. For the purpose of helping those readers who are not fully familiar with the Italian language, however, the translations supplied in this article give a fairly good approximation.

[9]Errors of a syntactic, morphological, and lexical nature are marked with an asterisk.

[10]It is of interest to note that the Italian Canadian speakers were able to monitor their production more carefully during the actual role-plays, where code-switches were produced with very low frequency.

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APPENDIX

SITUATION N. 1
You forgot a meeting with a friend; this is the second time that the same thing had happened with the same person. At the end of the day your friend phones you and says: *"I waited for you more than an hour! What happened?"*

Lei ha dimenticato un appuntamento con un'amica. Purtroppo é la seconda volta che una cosa simile si ripete. Verso sera la sua amica telefona e le dice:
"Ma.., ti ho aspettato piú di un'ora! Che cosa é successo?"

SITUATION N. 2
You promised your daughter (age 12) to go shopping with her, but important matters at work require your immediate attention and you cannot keep your promise. You call home to explain the situation and your daughter says: *"It's not fair! You promised!"*

Lei ha promesso a sua figlia (12 anni) di portarla a fare compere, ma degli urgenti impegni di lavoro le impediscono di mantenere la promessa. Lei telefona a casa per spiegare la situazione e sua figlia dice: *"Ma non é giusto! Me lo avevi promesso!"*

SITUATION N. 3
You arrived late at an important business meeting. Your boss was counting on your presence because she needed your support on a very important matter. At the end of the meeting, in private, your boss tells you:

Version 1
"Thanks a lot..!"

Version 2
"Too bad you were not at the meeting.."

Lei é arrivato/a in ritardo ad un'importante riunione di lavoro. Il suo capo contava sulla sua presenza e sul suo appoggio circa una importante questione. Alla fine della riunione, in privato, il suo capo le dice:

Version 1
"Mille grazie del favore, eh..?"

Version 2
"Mi dispiace che lei non fosse presente..."

SITUATION N. 4
You are at the supermarket and on your way out you bump into a lady carrying her groceries. Some of the bags she is carrying spill on the floor and she says:

Version 1
"Oh, my goodness!"

Version 2
"Look what you have done! Couldn't you be more careful?"

Lei si trova in un supermercato e all'uscita si scontra con una signora carica di borse della spesa. Nell'urto alcune borse cadono e si roves ciano e la signora dice:

Version 1
"Oh, santo cielo, guarda che pasticcio!"

Version 2
"Guardi cosa ha combinato! Non poteva fare un po' d'attenzione?"

SITUATION N. 5
While parking your car, you run into the side of another car and dent it. The driver gets out and says:"Hey, are you blind? Why don't you watch where you are going!"

Nel parcheggiare la macchina, lei urta e danneggia un'altra machina. La proprietaria esce e le dice: "*Ma é cieco? Stia un po' attento a quello che fa!*"

SITUATION N. 6
You return a book to the library. As you are about to leave, the librarian calls you back and tells you: "*The book you just returned is damaged. It looks as if something has been spilled on it...*"

Lei restituisce un libro in biblioteca. Mentre sta per uscire, la bibliotecaria la chiama e le dice: "*Guardi che questo libro é sporco! C'é stato rovesciato sopra qualcosa..*"

THE PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL CONTEXT IN REQUEST PERFORMANCE

Montserrat Mir

In studying the role of context in speech act performance, the tradition has always been to use controlled elicitation instruments that allow for the manipulation of social dimensions. By controlling social context, one assumes that all respondents will assess social relations very similarly although very little research has dealt with the validity of this assumption (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989; Spencer-Oatey, 1993). The aim of this paper is to explore the relationship between situational and cultural factors in producing requests and in assessing social dimensions in interaction. The data used here were obtained from a larger study of request performance by native and non-native speakers of English where two measures were employed: an open-ended questionnaire which elicited responses according to contextually controlled situations and an assessment questionnaire which triggered the subjects' evaluations of social parameters. The results of the study indicate that the perception of social dimensions in interaction, and more importantly, their interrelationship, definitely have a significant role in verbal behavior. Furthermore, an interesting correlation was found between the subjects' assessment of social factors and their requesting behavior such as in the level of directness shown in the subjects' request responses.

INTRODUCTION

In studying the role of context in speech at performance, the tradition has been to use controlled elicitation instruments that would allow for the control and manipulation of social dimensions such as social dominance, social distance, and so forth. It is assumed that by controlling the nature of social relations in interaction, subjects' verbal behavior could best be understood by referring to the social factors representing the context of the situation. However, this is a very indirect measure of studying sociopragmatic variation. How a subject verbally reacts in a particular situation cannot be analyzed on the sole basis of the researcher's subjective description of the social factors present in the interaction. Only the dialogic relationship between language, context and subjects' perceptions of social factors will provide the appropriate grounds for better understanding the role of social context in verbal behavior.

The interest in studying the role of context has led researchers from different fields to reexamine the notion of context and its effect on verbal and non-verbal relations. Traditional speech act theorists restricted the term context to the role of the hearer and the speaker in the interaction without considering other important situational factors such as cultural assumptions. Based on the notion of 'context of situation' first introduced by Malinowski (1923), Hymes (1972) developed the SPEAKING model in which a non-linguistic unit, the event, was the point of reference to study language use in context. Hymes' model was very influential for the scope of context for several reasons. On the one hand, it provided a quite structured framework of analysis which is still used quite

successfully to examine and explain verbal use in situated conditions. Also, Goodwin and Duranti (1992) argue that Hymes' model was important because it allows for cultural descriptions of the most important dimensions of the event before or while engaging in linguistic interpretation. Such an approach favors an interactive relationship between language and talk that is essential to understand the process of language socialization (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984). Nonetheless, in most studies of language and situations, one observes that the description of context before or after linguistic interpretation derives from the researcher and very rarely, an attempt is made to involve the participants in this description leading to the wrong assumption that speakers' perception of context directly corresponds with linguistic expressions in specific situations.

The relationship between verbal production and social perceptions can also be linked to the distinction established by Forgas (1985) between a sociocultural perspective and a more individual-psychological perspective on the study of language and situations. This distinction also appears reflected in the definition of situations. On the one hand, our culture and society provides us with a 'given' situational repertoire. On the other hand, every individual develops his/her own impression of the situation. In studying language use from a cross-cultural perspective we often disregard this distinction and language patterns and functions are interpreted only according to the sociocultural variation of the languages under study. The tendency is to look at large numbers of verbal responses across different contexts and draw conclusions about the situational repertoire of the culture of the subjects. However, the failure to examine how cultural social patterns and individual perceptions are linked results in a very limited understanding of how context influences verbal behavior.

Furthermore, in controlling social context in data elicitation instruments, the assumption is that all respondents will evaluate social relations similarly. Very little research has dealt with the validity of this assumption (Blum-Kulka and House, 1989; Spencer-Oatey, 1993). In the CCSARP, Blum-Kulka and House (1989) used a metapragmatic assessment questionnaire to assess some of the social dimensions represented in the situations used in the DCT (i.e., discourse completion task). They studied three native languages (i.e. Hebrew, German, and Argentinean Spanish) and included six social dimensions (i.e., social dominance and distance, rights and obligations, degree of difficulty and likelihood of compliance) to be assessed in five requesting situations. The results indicated that there were cross-cultural differences in the way the three different groups rated the social dimensions in specific request situations. More interestingly, it was also found that there was a correlation between how these subjects rated the situations and the level of directness displayed in the requesting responses offered in the DCT. Based on the results, Blum-Kulka and House claimed that the most important factor determining indirectness in request performance in all three languages was the degree of obligation in carrying out the request. Nonetheless, specific cultural correlations were also observed. For Hebrew and German speakers but not for Argentinean speakers the degree of social dominance of the speaker towards the hearer negatively correlated with indirectness. In their conclusion, Blum-Kulka and House clearly distinguished between two sets of factors affecting request performance: (a) cultural and (b) situational-contextual. According to these authors, cultural factors determine level of directness beyond situational variations whereas situational factors refer to the specific social dimensions in the interaction and their relationship with verbal behavior, as in the case of verbal indirectness in request realization patterns. This distinction

clearly resembles the one presented by Forgas (1985) in his definition of language and situations. Needless to say, the cultural and situational-contextual factors outlined in these distinctions are only worth considering when they are both equally taken into account in interpreting the dynamic, complex structure in which verbal behavior is shaped.

More recently, Spencer-Oatey (1993) further explored the assumption that different cultures assess social context similarly. In her study, two different nationality groups, British and Chinese, were chosen to examine the likelihood that they would hold similar perceptions of a given role relationship, that is, the role relationship of a tutor and his/her postgraduate student. The researcher focused on three aspects of the role relationship: superordination/equality, distance/closeness, and rights and obligations. The results clearly showed cross-cultural differences in the perception of the social factors involved. For example, it was found that Chinese subjects perceived tutors to be more superordinate to their students than British respondents did. Spencer-Oatey offered both practical and theoretical implications deriving from her work. Specifically, the author argues that more attention should be paid to the definition and measurement of social dimensions included in pragmatic research. For example, frequently, social relations such as familiarity are defined as dichotomies--familiar versus unfamiliar--without considering other factors that may influence the nature of this social dimension to the extent that different types of familiar relations can be observed within the broad category of familiar contexts.

In this paper, I explore the relationship between cultural factors and situational perceptions by examining not only how different native groups rate social dimensions but also how non-native speakers evaluate the context when they are placed in the target language setting. These results will indicate whether or not non-native speakers are influenced by the use of the target language in assessing social context and also to what extent social assessments are transferred from the first language into the second language.

METHODOLOGY

The data from this study come from a larger study of request production where three groups produced request responses to 24 situations. The total number of subjects participating in this study was 104. There were three groups of undergraduate university students. One group of 37 native Spanish speakers from the University of Salamanca in Spain served as the native Spanish population. There were 34 females and 3 males, with a total mean age of 23. A group of 34 university students from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana provided the native American English data. In this group there were 24 females and 10 males, with a total mean age of 20. Finally, the interlanguage data come from a group of 33 native Spanish speakers learning English as a foreign language. In this group there were 29 females and 4 males, with a total mean age of 22. At the time of their participation in this study, these L2 learners were enrolled in their last year as English majors in the University of Barcelona, Spain, and thus, their proficiency level in English can be described as high-intermediate or advanced. Additional information about the subjects language background was obtained by a short questionnaire. The mean number of years that these subjects had spent learning English was 9.4 and a total of 85% of this population (i.e.,

28 subjects out of 33) had been to an English speaking country for an average time of 2.2 months.[1]

The data elicitation techniques for this study involved two types of written questionnaires: an open-ended written questionnaire (OEQ) and a metapragmatic assessment questionnaire (MAQ). Two social variables were controlled in the open-ended questionnaire designed to trigger request responses. The two social variables were: degree of social distance or familiarity between the speaker and the hearer and degree of social dominance or power of the speaker towards the hearer. The familiarity factor had two levels: familiar versus unfamiliar and the power factor had three levels: powerful (Power+), no power (Power=), powerless (Power-). In order to keep these factors constant across all situations in the questionnaire, an attempt was made to maintain the same characters and their relationships with the interlocutor balanced in all contexts. For example, to describe a powerful relationship, situations were designed in which a boss had to request something of his/her secretary. If this context represented the familiar condition, additional information was given to ensure that the boss and the secretary knew each other. On the other hand, to represent the same power relationship but under the unfamiliar condition, it was made explicit in the description of the situation that the secretary was new at that office and thus, boss and secretary did not know each other. In order to have more than one sample for each combination of contextual variables, four situations with different actions being requested were created representing each variable combination. Here follows an example of one of the situations used in the OEQ (1) (see Appendix for a brief description of all the situations).

(1) You are the boss in a small company. Your secretary has worked for you for the last five years and you know each other quite well. Tomorrow you are going to meet with a very important client and you haven't finished preparing the report you have to give him. It is almost the end of the day and you want to ask your secretary to stay after office hours to help you with this report. What would you say?

After answering the open-ended questionnaire, subjects were asked to complete a metapragmatic questionnaire in which a description of the 24 situations included in the elicitation task was presented followed by a three point scale, where 1 represented the lowest point and 3 the highest. Subjects were asked to rate three social variables: familiarity, power and degree of imposition of the action being requested. The native language groups assessed the situations in their native languages whereas the non-native subjects completed the assessment questionnaire in English, that is, their target language. Here follows the above sample test item as it appeared in this questionnaire (2).

(2) You are the boss in a small company. Your secretary has worked for you for the last five years and you know each other quite well. Tomorrow you are going to meet with a very important client and you haven't finished preparing the report you have to give him. It is almost the end of the day and you ask your secretary to stay after office hours to help you with this report.

A. Familiarity:	Familiar	3	2	1	Unfamiliar
B. Power:	High	3	2	1	Low
C. Imposition:	High	3	2	1	Low

The metapragmatic source of information from this questionnaire was intended to address several issues: First, the results from this questionnaire will help account for the type of request strategies offered by the subjects in the production task. Second, this questionnaire also serves as a way to test the value of the social factors in building the situations in the OEQ. Finally, although only two social variables were included in the design of the situations (familiarity and power) and moreover, an effort was made to control the degree of imposition of the action, a look at the description of the situations reveals that variation in the type of actions may have an effect on the subjects' request responses. Hence, the decision to include the degree of imposition factor in the rating task was made in order to observe the effect of this variable on subjects' request responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Spearman rank-order correlation analyses were conducted to compare the ratings for the three social variables across the three groups from the MAQ. The results from these analyses indicated that the rankings for the 24 situations by the three groups were positively correlated for the familiarity and power social variables but not for the degree of imposition variable. Spearman rank-order correlation coefficients for the familiarity and power parameters paired across the three groups ranged from .66 to .93 ($p < .001$).[2]

Interestingly, for the three groups the highest correlation was shown in the power social variable rankings whereas the lowest correlation appeared in the familiarity variable rankings. These results help understand the distribution of request strategies in the different contexts found in the responses from the OEQ. In those analyses, it was found that the three groups showed similar requesting behaviors in contexts characterized by the type of power relationship between the interlocutors. For example, the highest percentage of direct requests displayed by the three groups was in situations where the speaker was in a powerful position. However, the three groups varied their distribution of request strategies on the basis of the familiarity social variable. For example, although the highest percentage of hints were displayed in situations where speaker and hearer shared the same power in the relationship, native English speakers produced more hints in familiar contexts, L2 learners offered more hints in unfamiliar contexts, and native Spanish speakers offered a similar number of hints in both conditions.

As mentioned, one objective of the assessment questionnaire was to test the value of the use of social variables in building the OEQ. A closer look at the ratings from the three groups showed that native Spanish speakers were the group that came closest to the intended values depicted in the social contexts in the OEQ. They clearly differentiated between familiar and unfamiliar conditions and between the three different degrees of power represented in the situations. The native English speakers showed the greatest disagreement with the initial social assessments of the situations in the OEQ. Nonetheless, the overall rating scale displayed by each of the three groups was in general

agreement with the values attached to social variables in building the situations in the OEQ.

An interesting outcome in the familiarity ratings is the interaction between familiarity and power parameters in the rank orders. Most evaluations of degree of familiarity between interlocutors corresponded with the evaluations of the power relationship, particularly in the case of native Spanish speakers and L2 learners. The highest familiarity ratings were given to situations where the interlocutors knew each other and shared the same power status (Fam./Power=) and the lowest ratings corresponded to situations where interlocutors did not know each other, and the speaker was in a powerless position (Unfam./Power-). The exact rank order of familiarity ratings from high to low based on the power parameter included the following situation-sets: Fam./Power=, Fam./Power+, Fam./Power-, Unfam./Power=, Unfam./Power+, and Unfam./Power-.

In the case of the power rankings, the pattern displayed is more complex. Once again, the native Spanish speakers and the L2 learners showed the greatest agreement on the correspondence between power and familiarity evaluations. However, the following pattern was observed in the three groups. In situations in which the requester was more powerful than his/her interlocutor (Power+), subjects rated the unfamiliar contexts higher in power than the corresponding familiar situations. In the powerless conditions (Power-), subjects rated the unfamiliar contexts lower in power than the familiar ones. Finally, in situations where speaker and hearer shared the same power status (Power=), familiar and unfamiliar conditions did not make a difference and a random pattern appears in the ratings. These results seem to lead to the following conclusion. In situations where power relations are fixed and known by the interlocutors, the degree of familiarity will play an important role. In fact, in interactions such as the one depicted in Power+ situations where a boss makes a request of his/her secretary, the fact that the speaker and the hearer do not know each other, results in a perception of the power relation as being higher than in the corresponding familiar interaction. Similarly, in a fixed status powerless situation, such as the one between a student requesting something of a professor, the fact that the student knows the professor results in a perception of the power status of the speaker as being lower than in an unfamiliar context.

These findings show that attributes that are commonly applied to participants in conversation as fixed phenomena, such as social dominance or familiarity, are in fact not static, but context dependent, and thus, may change or vary depending on the setting, the action and also the interlocutors' attitude towards the interaction. Similar findings were also observed in the CCSARP (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), although in their assessment of the situations other social variables were also included. Interestingly, the CCSARP researchers stated that using only the results of the assessment questionnaire is insufficient to determine to what extent the subjects' social assessments of the context were motivated by the type of roles the speakers were asked to play and thus, were influenced by the situation, or they were motivated by the social-institutional roles, already stereotyped in the social structure. Nonetheless, regardless of the real motivating force underlying these assessments, the CCSARP and the present findings are still useful in examining the type of perceptions that different cultures have towards certain social

roles or positions in society since in all verbal interactions speakers are forced to play a certain role which is also determined by the context and the type of activity to be performed.

No correlation was found between native Spanish and native English ratings and between native English and L2 learners' ratings for the degree of imposition variable. This result was somewhat expected because this variable was not included as a control variable in the design of the OEQ and although an attempt was made to include requesting actions that shared similar imposition demands, each situation involved a different requested action which resulted in different subjects' perceptions of the degree of imposition of the requested action. Interestingly enough, native Spanish speakers and L2 learners' ratings again showed a significant positive correlation of .76 ($p < .001$), which seems to indicate cross-cultural differences in the perception of this social variable between the American English culture and the Peninsular Spanish culture.

Due to the lack of correlation between the ratings of this social variable across the three groups, One-way ANOVAS and Post-Hoc Analyses for each situation were carried out to discover specific cross-cultural differences in social perceptions. Statistically significant cross-cultural differences in the ratings assigned to the degree of imposition variable were revealed for 12 of the 24 situations in the OEQ. The results in Table 1 show the situations in which significant differences were obtained.[3]

Table 1: Significant Group Differences in Subjects' Perceptions of Degree of Imposition of Situations in the OEQ.

	Social Variables			Degree of Imposition			
Situation #	Familiarity	Power	Description	English	Spanish	L2 Learners	F Value
2	Familiar	Power+	Make coffee	1.6 (17)		2.1 (2)	3.60*
3	Familiar	Power+	Photocopy documents	1.3 (24)	2.0 (9)	2.1 (6)	10.7**
5	Familiar	Power=	Borrow friend's notes	1.4 (22)	1.8 (11)		3.41*
7	Familiar	Power=	Clean the kitchen	1.7 (15)		2.2 (4)	4.11*
10	Familiar	Power-	Get an extension	2.3 (6)	1.4 (23)	1.5 (21)	18.81*
13	Unfamiliar	Power+	Type a report	1.9 (13)	2.6 (1)	2.6 (1)	14.68*
15	Unfamiliar	Power+	Bring a sandwich	1.5 (20)	2.2 (4)		6.04*
16	Unfamiliar	Power+	Make reservations	1.5 (19)	2.3 (3)	2.3 (3)	10.61*
17	Unfamiliar	Power=	Borrow a computer	2.6 (2)	1.5 (19)	1.5 (19)	34.42*
22	Unfamiliar	Power-	Borrow a book	2.3 (3)	1.4 (24)	1.5 (22)	17.35*
23	Unfamiliar	Power-	Borrow a paper	2.3 (4)	1.7 (13)	1.4 (23)	12.31*
24	Unfamiliar	Power-	Read student's paper	2.3 (5)	1.7 (14)	1.6 (17)	9.87*

*$p < .05$. **$p < .001$.

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The results in Table 1 clearly reveal some cross-cultural differences in the perception of the degree of imposition of the requesting actions in the questionnaire. First, in all Power+ situations (#2,3,13,15,16), regardless of Familiarity, Spanish speakers perceived the actions being requested as more imposing than English speakers. This is an interesting result because these actions involved a type that one would associate with the world of a secretary, such as making photocopies or typing a report and other less secretarial duties such as bringing in a sandwich or making coffee. However, despite the possible differences in the activity type, the trend was to perceive all these requests as more of an imposition by the two Spanish groups, the native Spanish and the L2 learners. Based on my limited knowledge of the world of the secretary, I would like to suggest a possible explanation for this behavior. Secretaries in the US. do not seem to have many responsibilities that involve decision making. Many of the activity types that they are engaged in are very simple tasks such as typing, mailing or minor accounting services. On the other hand, secretaries in Spain seem to have more opportunities to make important decisions themselves without being asked to do so. Consequently, for a Spanish speaker the idea of asking the secretary to make coffee, bring a sandwich, make photocopies or even type a report that the boss lost in his/her computer may not seem to be the secretary's responsibilities and thus, these actions are perceived as very imposing. Nonetheless, the difference in the two cultural groups' perceptions of the degree of imposition of the requests illustrated here provides a clear example of the effects of cultural norms on the interpretation of social actions and thus, on the type of verbal behavior displayed in similar contexts across cultures.

At the other end of the power continuum, we find that in contexts where the speaker was in a powerless position (#10,22,23,24), the opposite behavior occurred. Native English speakers perceived the actions being requested as more imposing than Spanish speakers. English speakers seem to be influenced by the type of relationship between the interlocutors and the fact that the speaker is in a powerless position may be responsible for the perception of the actions being requested as very imposing--that is, the actions being requested are not as important to determine their degree of imposition as the fact that the person asking the request is in a powerless position towards the person responding to the request. Spanish speakers, on the other hand, do not seem to base their perceptions of the degree of imposition of these actions on the social dominance relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The type of action being requested seems to be the key factor in triggering these perceptions for the Spanish group. The requests in Power- situations could be interpreted as permission requests rather than action requests. The requests to borrow the professor's paper or book or give the student an extension on a paper do not require the hearer to perform any physical action but to grant something to the hearer--a book, a paper, or an extension, which may explain why Spanish speakers assessed these requests as less imposing than English subjects. In the case of requesting the professor to read the student's paper, differences between groups' perceptions were statistically significant and Spanish speakers perceived this action as less imposing than English speakers, but Spanish subjects also assessed this action as more imposing than the other Power- requesting actions in the group. In this situation, the speaker has to ask the hearer to do an action that will be costly to the hearer in terms of the time or effort needed to read the student's paper and provide feedback. In the other Power- situations, the type of permission requests involved do not seem to be costly to

the hearer which may explain the lower degree of imposition ratings offered by the Spanish groups in comparisons with the English subjects. Consequently, based on these results the costs and benefits involved in the requests may have played a relevant role in assessing the weight of the imposition of the actions being requested in these contexts for the Spanish group. For the English subjects, the costs and benefits may not have been such an important factor in determining the degree of imposition of the requested actions here as the type of powerless position in which the speaker finds himself in these requesting situations, which would explain why this group perceived these requests to be more of an imposition than Spanish speakers.

Finally, in contexts where interlocutors are not differentiated by the power status between them (#5,7,17), the three language groups again behaved differently. Spanish speakers evaluated requesting that a friend lend some notes (#5) and clean the kitchen (#7) as more imposing than native English speakers did. In unfamiliar conditions, native English speakers perceived the requests to borrow a student's computer as more imposing than the Spanish speakers. This result needs to be explained in terms of the subjects' direct relationship with computers. Today computers are more than just a tool. For many of us, regular computer users, computers have become a very personal instrument where our thoughts are secretly stored. This may explain why Americans perceive the action of lending their computer to a stranger very imposing. On the other hand, the lack of familiarity and availability of computers in the Peninsular Spanish context may explain why Spanish speakers do not view lending a computer as very imposing since for many of these speakers a computer is only a powerful typewriter.

If only the types of actions being requested were considered, regardless of the social variables defining the interlocutors' relationship, the results from Table 2 would seem to indicate that situations where the requester had to borrow something from the hearer were overall considered to be more imposing by native American English speaking subjects than by the Spanish respondents (#17,22,23). However, if such a generalization wants to be maintained, one would have to wonder why American subjects assessed situation 5, where a friend requests another friend to lend him/her some class notes, to be less imposing than the way Spanish subjects did. Such a finding seems to contradict the generalization above established which indicated that Americans in general seemed more reluctant to want to lend anything than Spaniards. However, this type of contradiction is only another piece of evidence for the dynamic relationship existing between the different social aspects present in an interaction, including not only the type of human relationships but also the interlocutors' perceptions of actions or physical objects involved in the communicative act.

Having established cross-cultural differences in the assessment of certain social variables in interaction, the next step is to try to relate these assessments to the degree of indirectness of the request responses in the OEQ. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed between the ratings given in the assessment questionnaire and the level of indirectness shown in the responses from the OEQ.[4] The results of these analyses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Contextual Factors and Indirectness

Factors	English	Spanish	L2 Learners
Familiarity	.16	.06	-.13
Power	-.53*	-.49*	-.50*
Imposition	.11	-.59*	-.60*

*$p < .05$.

These results show that only one factor, power, negatively correlates with indirectness in all three cultures. The higher the degree of power of the speaker towards the hearer, the less indirectness is to be expected. For Spanish speakers regardless of whether they speak in Spanish or in English, a negative correlation also exists between the degree of imposition of the action being requested and the degree of indirectness of the request. The higher the degree of imposition, the less indirectness will be manifested in the request. Finally, the degree of familiarity between interlocutors does not seem to correlate with the level of indirectness in the speakers' requesting behavior for any of the three groups.

These results support what was found in the request forms used by the subjects in response to the items on the open-ended questionnaire. The three groups of subjects offered the highest proportion of direct requests in contexts where the speaker was in a powerful position. For example, here are some of the responses offered by different subjects in boss-secretaries requesting contexts: "Make photocopies of this report", "We'll need some coffee in here, Jerry. Please, bring some", "Stay after work to help me finish the report." Also, it is interesting to notice that the distribution of direct request strategies in these situations was not determined by the familiarity factor; a high proportion of direct requests was observed in both familiar and unfamiliar boss-secretaries contexts.

More directness also correlated with a higher degree of imposition of the requested action but only in the case of Spanish speakers and L2 learners. This result is also supported by the rank-order correlations of the assessments by Spanish speakers in power+ situations where these subjects evaluated the actions in power+ contexts as very imposing.

In the CCSARP project, the correlation coefficients between subjects' assessments of the contextual factors and the level of indirectness revealed that degree of obligation to carry out the act and degree of social dominance were, among others, important factors influencing level of indirectness in a request. The degree of obligation included in their analysis may help us understand the results obtained in the assessment of degree of imposition in this study. Note that situations in which a boss requests something of a secretary were viewed as highly imposing by the Spanish group and the L2 learners. One

could argue that in those contexts a perception of a high degree of obligation to carry out the request could be expected due to the fact that the secretary works for a boss and therefore, the secretary feels obligated to respond to the boss' demands, which also explains why more direct requests were offered in those contexts by the three groups.

Since the degree of obligation factor and other factors such as the right to make the request, the estimated likelihood of compliance, and so on, were not included in this analysis, it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the relationship between degree of imposition and use of directness in requesting behavior. However, these findings suggest that Spanish speakers perceive the weight of certain social factors differently from native English speakers and more importantly, these assessments still exist when the speaker is placed in the target language setting.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper began by addressing the issue of controlled elicitation techniques and their inherent assumption that a systematic control of social variables in interaction will lead to the interpretation of situated language use. In order to re-examine the validity of this assumption a study was carried out with two specific objectives in mind: First, to test to what extent native and non-native speakers would assess context similarly and secondly, to further explore the relationship between situational factors and the subjects' requesting behavior. The use of the metapragmatic assessment questionnaire was intended to address these issues.

The results have shown that the three groups under investigation assessed some of the situations in the MAQ from a cultural perspective, which could help interpret the observed subjects' requesting behavior. For example, it was clear that the three groups assessed power relations in the situations very similarly. However, the degree of familiarity between the speaker and the hearer was perceived slightly different by the two native cultures. More importantly, this study has shown that perceptions of different elements of the context are highly interdependent and thus, how a power relationship is assessed will depend on how the degree of familiarity or degree of imposition of the action are perceived. Furthermore, this interdependency becomes more complex when different cultures are taken into account. Cultural differences and/or similarities between how subjects perceive context are determined not only by the value of specific social factors within the cultural social norm system but more importantly by how these specific social factors influence each other in determining the type of verbal or non-verbal response expected in particular contexts. The most clear example of this interaction was found in the analysis of the situations where the three groups assessed the degree of imposition of the action significantly different due to cultural norms with regard to the interrelationship between social elements in the situation.

Several implications and concerns arise from this investigation. First, an understanding of the subjects' individual perceptions of social context in interaction is totally necessary if we are to understand the relationship between the given sociocultural repertoire about contextual factors that every individual brings into the interaction and

its effect on verbal behavior. Metapragmatic assessment questionnaires are a useful tool to obtain introspective and retrospective information about the subject's underlying motivations in providing verbal responses to particular situations. Instead of trying to explain verbal responses only on the basis of what or how subjects respond in specific contexts, we need to study how subjects evaluate the social context of the interaction because we cannot assume that all subjects perceive context similarly.

Furthermore, assessments of social factors in interaction are useful to confirm the researcher's intuitions in building contexts in controlled elicitation tasks. As it was shown in my study, Spanish speakers in L1 and L2 were the ones that came closer to my assessment of the social factors described in each situation. I am a Peninsular Spanish speaker who has been in the US for more than six years and I still evaluate the weight of certain social factors according to my native culture rules. Closely related to this issue is the well-known concern in controlled elicitation studies of trying to control for as many variables as possible. However, by including more variables, the analysis becomes more complicated because as we have seen, the interaction between the different elements of the context is what really determines the type of verbal behavior displayed. Consequently, because in elicitation tasks we cannot control for everything, we should at least ensure that subjects have a chance to evaluate the weight of all the possible social variables present in each situation. In the present study, only three social variables were included to be assessed in the MAQ, but there are many other social factors present in the situations that could not be included due to the length of the questionnaire. Furthermore, as Spencer-Oatey (1993) mentions, scales of three points are not sensitive enough to the perceptual differences to be expected in social assessments where how a social factor is perceived depends on the presence and weight of other situational factors in the interaction. Scales of five or seven points would be more suitable for accurate social assessments.

Another important implication deriving from social assessments is that context is not a static entity that can be studied by isolating social factors independently of each other. As this study has shown, social factors such as power and familiarity were evaluated in relation to each other in the interaction and not as absolute independent phenomena. This has an important research implication for studies which use controlled elicitation tasks where social factors are directly related to linguistic expressions. Such an approach has a negative effect on the reliability of the generalizations drawn from the data due to the intricate structure of contextual factors affecting verbal responses. Consequently, in controlled elicitation studies, any claims about the weight of certain social relations such as familiarity or power should be taken with caution. Instead more attention should be paid to how subjects behave in specific contexts, such as in the computer situation described above, if we want to achieve an acceptable understanding of cultural values in context perception and its relationship to talk.

Finally, it is interesting to observe that in studying the language use of second language learners we should not only look at linguistic transfer but also at the transfer of social assessments in order to explain linguistic behavior and situations. The use of the target language is independent from how the subject perceives context. In analyzing the requesting behavior of these learners, it was found that their requesting realization

patterns showed clear signs of L1 transfer although an approximation of English standards was also evident in terms of request strategy usage. For example, the frequency of use of direct requests by the L2 learners was lower than the one observed in the Spanish data and thus, approximating the low frequency displayed in the native English data. It is interesting to note, then, that although these learners perceived the weight of situational factors in English contexts as the way native Spanish speakers did, the learners were able to approximate American standards in their requesting realization patterns. This possible mismatch between how L2 speakers perceive context and how native-like they can verbally behave in the target language should be considered for further research. Nonetheless, one needs to keep in mind that this was a production study where individual social assessments were related to requesting behavior and therefore, nothing can be said about the appropriateness or effectiveness of the second language learners' requesting behavior. Therefore, more research is needed to study to what extent transfer of social assessments is related to the appropriateness of the L2 speech.

In conclusion then, we should not assume that in building controlled elicitation tasks where social variables are controlled and represented in many contexts, subjects are going to assess social factors similarly among themselves and also as the researcher planned them. Claims about which certain social relations are responsible for the observed verbal behavior cannot be made without considering how individuals perceive context. Furthermore, in studying second language verbal patterns and functions, we should not assume that the use of the target language will predict target-like social assessments and consequently, it is not enough to study native language groups' social perceptions to explain second language behavior.

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NOTES

[1]Since exposure to the target language is a major element in a complete acquisition of the sociolinguistic norms of the second language, only subjects who had been exposed to an English culture for less than five months were included in the study. Originally a group of 41 Spanish speakers learning English in Spain participated in the study. However, since eight of those subjects had spent more than five months in an English speaking country, they were not included in the analysis of the data.

[2]Coefficients are as follows: Familiarity: native English and native Spanish .66; native English and L2 learners .71; Power: native English and native Spanish .93 and native English and L2 learners .92 ($p < .001$).

[3]The numbers in the Degree of Imposition column read as follows: First, the rating means of the assessment questionnaire are only given for significant group differences shown in the Post-Hoc test. Therefore, if only the means for two groups are given, this indicates that the mean for the third group did not reach significance. Secondly, the number in parenthesis following the rating means represents the rank-order given by the group subjects for the specific situation. Note that the rank order goes from high to low, so that 24 is the least imposing and 1 is the most imposing.

[4]Level of indirectness was assessed following the coding scheme used in the CCSARP to classify request responses. According to this coding system, requests are categorized into three main categories based on an indirectness scale: direct requests, conventional indirect requests, and non-conventional indirect requests. A scale of three points was assigned to the request responses classified according to these three categories where 1 corresponded to the most direct strategies and 3 to the less direct. The means obtained across all the situations were used in the analyses to assess indirectness. For further information about this procedure, see Mir (1994).

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APPENDIX

Familiar/Power+: A boss asks his/her secretary 1) to stay after office hours to work on a report, 2) to prepare some coffee and bring it to the office, 3) to make photocopies of a report and send them to some clients, 4)to help him/her file documents under a new system.

Familiar/Power=: A friend asks another friend 5) to borrow some class notes, 6) to get help to study for a test; 7) to clean the kitchen, 8) to pay for lunch.

Familiar/Power-: A student asks his/her professor 9) for a ride home, 10) for an extension on a paper, 11) to read a paper the student has written for a conference and give an opinion on it, 12) to lend him/her a library book that the professor has.

Unfamiliar/Power+: A boss asks his/her new secretary 13) to type a report, 14) to come to the office on Saturday morning to work on a report, 15) to bring him/her a sandwich from the cafeteria, 16) to make plane reservations.

Unfamiliar/Power=: A student asks another student 17) to borrow the student's computer, 18) to take a picture, 19) to move over in the bus, 20) to use a chair in the cafeteria.

Unfamiliar/Power-: A student asks his/her new professor 21) for an assignment, 22) to lend him/her a book that just came out, 23) for a copy of a conference paper the professor has written, and 24) to read a paper that the student has written for a journal and give an opinion on it.

PAUSES AND CO-CONSTRUCTION IN CHINESE PEER REVIEW DISCUSSIONS

Hao Sun

Following the Comparative Rhetoric model suggested by Saville-Troike & Johnson (1994), this study examines the discourse behavior of native speakers of American English conducting peer review discussions in English and that of native speakers of Chinese performing the same task in Chinese. The analysis is based on audio-taped peer review discussions of eight college students conducted in college writing classes. One of the discourse features demonstrated by the native speakers of Chinese in this study is co-construction, a discourse phenomenon of collaboration, although there is considerable difference between individual participants in terms of frequency of such behavior. On the other hand, while co-construction has been evidenced in studies of English conversation, native speakers of American English did not manifest similar interactional behavior in their peer review discussions.

This paper describes an exploratory study in comparative discourse analysis, specifically on peer review discussions conducted in Chinese by NSs of Chinese and in English by NSs of English, comparing the use of native language by NSs across cultures for the same speech function. My general research question is whether peer review talk conducted in Chinese differs from that conducted in English and if so, in what ways. In this paper, however, I begin to explore the phenomenon of pause and co-construction in Chinese.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halliday's functional approach to language (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) provides a socio-semiotic perspective holding that language is shaped by its purposes; it is the social function that determines what language is and how it has evolved. All use of language has a context and it is the context that "determines" the text; this is extremely important for us to understand when we examine how people actually interact with each other. The context of situation, however, is only the immediate environment. There is also a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted: its context of culture. Any actual context of situation is embedded in its sociocultural environment. Halliday further posits that the relationship between text and context is a dialectical one in that the text creates context as much as the context creates the text: the content of the interaction as well as the participants all become part of the context. Discussing different approaches to the analysis of context, Goodwin and Duranti (1992) call into question the adequacy of earlier definitions of context as a set of variables. Defining context as "a socially constituted, interactively sustained, time-bound phenomenon" (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992, p. 6), the authors propose a more dynamic view of the relationship between talk and context, and between linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions of communicative events, emphasizing the examination of the process of interaction between participants.

Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness (1987) provides a way of investigating cultural differences in conversational interaction. The assumption is that all competent individuals have two kinds of face: positive face is our self-image we wish for others to recognize and appreciate; negative face is our need for personal space--freedom from imposition. In the context of the mutual vulnerability of face, people will either try to avoid face-threatening acts (FTAs), or to minimize the threat by employing certain strategies. The need to attend to both one's own face and that of others, Brown and Levinson claim, seems to be a universal principle operating in all human societies although the content of face will differ in different cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Examining Brown and Levinson's theory of face in the light of the Japanese language and culture, Matsumoto (1988) challenges the universality of the constituents of the notion of face. Matsumoto (1988) argues that the notion of negative face is alien to Japanese culture because to defend one's own territory from encroachment is not a primary concern for the Japanese; instead, a person's position in relation to others in the group and his/her acceptance by others are of significance to individuals.

There is a saying in Chinese culture: "sincere and helpful advice may be harsh sounding but is beneficial to your behavior; effective medicine may taste bitter yet it will do your health good." From this analogy, we can see that sincere advice is expected to be unpleasant in Chinese society and, as it is meant for the good of the listener, the advisee should take the advice with great appreciation. This might be part of the reason why the way Chinese speakers offer advice seems to be more straight forward (with less sugar-coating) to Americans. Furthermore, the concern for negative face seems to be less relevant in the traditional Chinese society because individual rights and privacy are of much less significance.

Gumperz (1982) demonstrates that speakers of different languages or from different ethnic backgrounds may have different conventions in discourse structure and strategies. There are also differing cross-cultural schemata of interpretation and expectation regarding the appropriate and expected conduct of interaction. Communication might break down or result in misunderstanding due to different ways of speaking, i.e., linguistic conventions or contextualization cues. Speakers of Indian English, for example, may differ with respect to conversation control devices and thematic progression. Gumperz points out that certain ethnic stereotypes are largely the result of use of one's own pattern of discourse to judge others.

In her work on discourse analysis, Tannen (1984) provides us with evidence of different styles of talk among friends and the impact on their interaction and their interpretation of each other's intent. What is important is "not only what you say, but how you say it" (p. 2). "The fact that people understand each other's ways of signaling meaning is in itself proof of shared background and context," "a metamessage of rapport" (p. 27). On the other hand, different styles of talk can create misunderstanding in communication. Tannen further argues, however, that style is not absolute; it is "context-sensitive" depending on who is speaking to whom in what situation.

In discourse studies, the phenomena of co-construction, or joint production of sentences, has received attention among researchers and conversational analysts (eg. Falk, 1980;

Ferrara, 1992; Lerner, 1991; Ochs et. al, 1979). Co-construction refers to utterances that are initiated by one speaker and completed or extended by another speaker in a syntactically and semantically consistent manner (Ferrara, 1992), reflecting the collaborative nature of conversation. It should be noted, however, that a considerable amount of the data on co-construction in English seems to be collected from settings of psychotherapeutic discourse. Observations and analysis of talks in other settings and context will enhance our understanding of the phenomenon of co-construction and the context in which it occurs.

On cross-cultural pragmatics, Wierzbicka (1991) discusses different cultural priorities and the manifestation of these values in communication. Comparing Japanese culture with American culture, Wierzbicka states that interdependence in Japan is valued more highly than autonomy. One example illustrating such a principle is conversational convention. Utterances, according to Mizutani, are expected to be "a collective work of the speaker and the addressee" (Mizutani, 1987, p.27, cited in Wierzbicka, 1991) and one of the Japanese conversational politeness conventions is to leave some sentences unfinished so that the addressee can complete them. Wierzbicka's argument here is that Japanese conversational style is more interdependent than that of Americans, and in Japanese discourse, the completion of utterances by the addressee indicates their value of interdependence.

The study by Ono & Yoshida (1995, in press), however, reports findings that offer little support for Mizutani's claim. Co-construction in Japanese conversation, Ono & Yoshida argue, is quite rare; the co-construction cases in the Japanese data seem to suggest the importance of an individual factor rather than to indicate a cultural pattern. The authors propose that there are actually pragmatic concerns as well as syntactic features that constrain the use of co-construction in Japanese. Syntactic features include post position, a verb-final construction, and the fact that the main clause always follows the subordinate one. With regard to pragmatics, the concern for "private territory" is a major factor which is responsible for the rarity of co-construction in Japanese. In conclusion, the authors suggest that Japanese speakers rarely collaborate at the syntax level in conversation; they do so through frequent backchannels and repeating part of what is produced by the first speaker.

A distinction is often made by discourse analysts between transactional and interactional talk. "Transactional talk is for getting business done in the world" while "interactional talk... has as its primary functions the lubrication of the social wheels..." (McCarthy, 1991, p. 136). On the other hand, McCarthy points out that talks rarely consist strictly of one or the other, as the borders between the two are often blurred. It seems that some features of Chinese discourse are directly related to the distinction between transactional and interactional talk.

Analyzing Chinese discourse features, Scollon and Scollon (1991) argue that the "distinction between inside and outside relationships governs speaking rights and the introduction of topics so that there are actually two separate cultural patterns" (1991, p. 118). The former refers to relatives or friends whereas the latter stands for temporary contacts that are utilitarian and last only briefly, such as business encounters in a bank or a post office. While it is true that Chinese people prefer to introduce their subject or main points after background statements have been made, that is not necessarily true in interaction in outside relationships. For example, in the case of a ticket office or post office conversational exchange, there is no small talk at the beginning and little verbal exchange

is actually expected, thus revealing significant differences between inside and outside relationships in discourse patterns.

A few studies in the past years have informed us of some aspects that are likely to incur potential miscommunication between Chinese learners of English and native speakers of English. Young (1982) points out that one important rule in Chinese discourse is that definitive summary statements of main arguments are delayed until the end rather than presented at the very beginning, a pattern that native English speakers find difficult to follow. As to why such sequential organization patterns are used in Chinese discourse, one interpretation offered by Young (1982) is that they represent non-confrontational styles, while Saville-Troike & Johnson (1994) state that many NSs of Chinese are more likely to attribute the appeal to "logical" need. As a NS of Chinese, I see validity in both interpretations; they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. It is, rather, the nature of the interaction (transactional vs. interactional) that tends to underline the significance of different strategies. In formal contexts, for example, the logical appeal might be more important. Yet the avoidance of confrontation is of primary concern in interpersonal relationships. What is essential is that we need to be aware of the distinction between two types of social interaction: those involving inside vs. outside relationships.

In her studies of non-native English-speaking teaching assistants, Tyler, Jeffries, and Davies (1988) proposed that the perception of incoherence might be better understood as the cumulative result of interacting miscues at the discourse level (syntactic incorporation, lexical discourse markers, tense/aspect etc). Tyler and Bro (1992) conducted a study asking NSs of English to rate the comprehensibility of discourse in English produced by NSs of Chinese from Young's study. They reported that the results provide strong empirical support for the claims of Tyler, Jeffries and Davies (1988) that for Americans, much difficulty in comprehension is due to the "lack" of discourse-structuring cues, or "presence of miscues," from the perspective of NSs of American English.

Corroborating the observation of Tyler, Jeffries and Davies (1988), Scollon (1993) reports results of a study of conversation in English by a NS of Chinese which shows that there is a higher frequency of conjunctions and some of them are used in ambiguous contexts. It is these functionally misplaced conjunctions that are most likely to give rise to misinterpretation and a sense of incoherence.

Reporting on an investigation of the politeness strategies used by Americans and Chinese subjects improvising the same situation in their respective native languages, Nash (1983) argues against the classification of cultures into politeness types, for example, that the U.S. is a positive politeness culture. Instead, Nash suggests that politeness strategies are more situation-specific. It is shown in his study that American subjects relied heavily on the negative politeness strategy of hedging, whereas the Chinese subjects utilized positive politeness such as showing concern for and interest in the addressee. This does not mean, however, that such a pattern will be evident in all situations and all discourse performances because the concept and content of face may vary from culture to culture. Nash's study here seems to suggest that it might not be appropriate for us to analyze discourse with a dichotomy of positive vs. negative politeness strategies, at least not in the case of Chinese discourse for two reasons: first, the concept of freedom from imposition as is embraced in

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negative politeness actually may not be an issue of magnitude in the Chinese society due to its long history of feudalism and hierarchical social structure; secondly, the "inside" relationship in the study may have been crucial in terms of the results.

There are also a number of studies conducted with regard to peer review. Johnson and Yang (1990) show evidence that both NSs and NNSs writing in English took into consideration interpersonal and ideational functions in constructing effective peer review and they employed similar politeness strategies to minimize FTAs. The NNSs produced reviews that were equivalent to those of the NSs with regard to effectiveness and appropriateness. They also employed politeness strategies in similar ways. There were differences, however, in the use of grammatical and lexical means for most of the NNSs which exemplified their less proficient use of English in the discourse of peer review. The most striking difference between the two groups though lies in the giving of deference. The NNSs tended to make more explicit references to power factors, suggesting their lack of knowledge of the content of their partner's paper when they made suggestions.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design

This study followed the non-deficit model of comparative rhetoric suggested by Saville-Troike and Johnson (1994). Saville-Troike and Johnson (1994) propose that analysis of comparative rhetoric can be enriched by incorporating an ethnography of communication perspective. Comparative rhetoric, the authors suggest, takes as its primary analytic task describing and accounting for similarities and differences in patterning within different speech communities. Therefore, it is important to incorporate internal perspectives which can significantly enhance validity of interpretation. This research involved a qualitative comparison of sociolinguistic behavior of NSs of Chinese conducting peer review discussions in Chinese and NSs of English carrying out the same activity in English. The analysis is based on audio taped peer review discussions of eight students conducted in college writing classes. I was teaching one of the classes.

Peer review in composition classes for international students is usually conducted in English in accordance with instructional goals as well as students' needs. In this sense, the use of the Chinese language for peer discussion is somewhat unusual from an instructional perspective. However, as this study is about comparative discourse, the use of Chinese is essential. I also assumed that between NSs of the same language, using their L1 to converse would not be unnatural; it may even be more comfortable for some participants and this turned out to be true.

Participants

There were 8 participants in my study: one male and three female Chinese, and two male and two female Americans. They were all undergraduates enrolled in the first semester freshmen composition course at the University of Arizona, the American students in English 101 and the Chinese students in English 107. Two of the Chinese participants were from one

class that I was teaching while the other two were from another section of the same course. All the participants had experienced peer review by the time their conversations were recorded but the Chinese students were only introduced to the task in English writing classes in the U.S.

Task

The participants conducted peer reviews in class while their discussions were tape recorded. Having exchanged the drafts of their essays with their partners in their respective classes, the participants then read through their peers' composition, and proceeded afterwards to share orally both positive comments and constructive criticism with their peers about the essay they read. Of the three instructors (including myself) involved in this study, two of them had specific questions for the review discussion while one instructor just gave general instructions to give each other feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Procedure

Tape recording was done during normal class time in a separate room while students were discussing each other's papers after reading the drafts of their assigned essays. All the participants were informed that I was recording their talk for my research, but the focus of my study was intentionally not specified in the hope that their performance would be affected as little as possible.

After the data were collected, I made transcripts following the transcription conventions of Tannen (1984) and then translated the Chinese peer review discussions into English. I also interviewed some of the participants in order to obtain participants' explanation for their discourse behavior as well as to corroborate my interpretation of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Upon comparing the transcripts, I found some interesting differences as well as similarities between the two language groups. For the data in Chinese, the use of pauses, incomplete sentences and joint constructions seem to be one of the most salient characteristics compared with my English data. In the peer review discussion, Chinese speakers sometimes pause within a sentence, and then the interlocutor completes the sentence in such a way that it is both syntactically and semantically consistent.

My discussion will be presented in the following order: pauses and co-construction, incomplete sentences, possible explanations, the context: with whom and when, pauses and co-construction in comparison, and conclusion.

Pauses and Co-Construction

Based on the Chinese data, the pauses that occurred can be classified into three categories which I will discuss below. The first type of pause can be illustrated in the following example.

We can see in (1) that speaker J paused after "are more likely", which was completed by speaker A's "to happen maybe". For the sake of analysis, let's label this kind of pause as pause type I (PI) which appears to be the result of the speaker's deliberation of proper word(s). This seems to be similar to the classification of the third type of joint production by Ferrara (1992) --"helpful utterance completions" (p. 220), which refers to "minimal additions offered by a listener who detects some difficulty on the part of a speaker in accessing an item in the mental lexicon" (p. 220). However, while Ferrara's taxonomy is structured around joint production, my analysis here uses pauses as the focus because I intend to cover both the pause and the completion of the sentence.

(1)

1 J 第一个我觉得 题目 选得 很好，因为 这种，
first I feel topic chose well because this kind
First, I think that you've chosen a good topic, because this,

2 这种， 这种 事情 年轻人 特别
this kind this kind matter young people particularly
this this kind of thing, especially to young people, is

3 会 发生 嗯 发生这种事情
likely happen yeah happen this kind matter
more likely... to happen, yeah, to happen

4 A 好象特别 会 发生
seem particularly likely happen
seem more likely to happen

A somewhat different type of pause seems to be evident in the discussion between speaker C and L in (2).

(2)

1 L 这篇文章 我觉得不 很 好 写。 虽然 资料
this piece article I feel not very easy write though materials
This article I feel it's not easy to write Though there

2 很多 可是
a lot but
are lots of materials but

3 C 不 知 怎么写
not know how write
don't know how to write it

4 L 对 对。 又要 argue 又要 用 另一种
right right also need argue also need use another kind
Right right we need to argue, we also need to write

5 C 太多了
too much
too much.

6 L language 写的话。 可能
language write maybe
it in another language, maybe

7 C 就 困难 一点。
then difficult a little
it's more difficult

Here, speaker L (male) started by mentioning that "though there are many materials", and then he paused after "but". Speaker C (female) finished his sentence with "don't know how to write it", which seems to be a logical completion as confirmed by L's next utterance "Right". Likewise, L paused after "maybe" in the same conversation which was followed by C's "it's more difficult."

For the sake of differentiation, I will categorize these pauses as pause type II which occurred at the juncture of a clause. These pauses were not taking place before a certain "searched-for" word; rather, they preceded almost a whole sentence or clause. This is extremely interesting because the fact that most of the sentence has not yet been uttered makes the inference of the unspoken part much more difficult. Surprisingly, C was able to

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complete both utterances and L confirmed that she had conjectured correctly with "right" in both cases. Judging from the context, we can see this type of pause does not derive from pondering over the choice of a word; rather, it is related to the whole sentence.

Analyzing the syntactic properties of joint construction of a sentence, Lerner (1991) discusses in detail the foreshadowing of the structure of "if" at the beginning of a speaker's utterance in English which projects the second component in the sentence. Here, in the Chinese case, the word *though* in (2) line 1 has the same property as the English *if* in the sense of foreshadowing. In Chinese, the word *though* is always placed at the beginning of a sentence, unlike in English. Furthermore, contrary to the English rule, it requires the presence of *but* in the following portion of the sentence. Therefore, the word *though*, an adversative conjunction in Chinese, naturally orients a listener syntactically and semantically in the sense that what follows in the latter part of the utterance becomes more or less predictable. Example (2) discussed above seems to serve as a good example of such foreshadowing. It makes the co-construction at the clausal level possible.

The third type of pause is different from the first two not so much because of its syntactic position but because of its purpose and function. It seems that pauses in this category serve as indicators of forthcoming criticism, expressions of hesitation, or even unwillingness to critique, and possibly invitations for completion of the utterance by the addressee. The next example (3), which, interestingly enough, contains three pauses, illustrates pauses of this type.

(3)

1 L: 你 现在没有想法的话， 那 人家 就会看 你 这

" you now no have thoughts then others would read your this

If you don't have your own opinions, then others reading your paper

2 文章 ... 嗯，这是一个，

essay ... yeah this is one

would feel eh, this is one point

3 A: 没有什么

have nothing

at a loss

还有 一个就是 我就是觉得 你那个 叙述性
still have one just is I just is feel you that narrative
Another thing that is, I feel there's,... not enough narrative

因为 它叫 narrative 啊 主要是
because it call narrative ah mainly is
Because it's called narrative mainly

yeah
yeah
yeah

说 就是 通过 叙述 来说明你的
speak narrative just is through narrative explain your
it's narrative that means you express your opinion through

观点 说明 一件事 或一个人,
opinion explain one event or one person
narrative your opinion about a person or an event

uh huh uh huh
uh huh uh huh
Uh huh, uh huh.

对 对
right right
Right right

其实 你 这 里头 材料 还 是有,
actually you this inside material still is have
Actually you have quite a lot of ideas in your essay

不过你就 等于 没有
but you just almost not
but it's just like you didn't

没有把它
not it
didn't make it

4 { 点明。 / explicit / explicit } 我觉 是这样，
I think is thus way
I think that's it

15 } { 讲清楚 / say clear / make it clear } 对， / right / Right 我看 是能
I read is can
I can still

16 } 看懂， 也 可能 因为 我们 { 有 一样的文化， / have same culture / share the same culture
understand also maybe because we
understand perhaps because we
对， { 我们自己 懂。 / right we ourselves understand / Right, we ourselves understand

17 A

18 } 但是 我就 觉得 可能 别人 会 会觉得
But I just feel maybe others would would feel
But I feel maybe others would would feel
对，要是外国人看
right if foreigner read
Right, if foreigners read it

20 } 嗯
yeah
yeah

21 A 对，还有就是 象 你 讲的我没有说自己的感受，
right and just as like you say I not have say self feeling
Right And like you said I didn't express how I felt,

22 J 对 就是要 增加 一些 描述性，通过
right just is need increase some narrative through
Right you need to add some narrative stuff, through

23 这样的描述性的东西，然后
this narrative thing then
narrative then

24 uh huh uh huh 就拿你写出来的说到底
uh huh uh huh just like you wrote say
Uh huh uh huh like what you wrote, talk about what

25 比如 你 哪 方面的知识 改变 哪 方面，那我并没
because you which aspect knowledge change which way then I not
you never learned and in what way you have changed. I didn't

26 把它表现出来，
express out
write about those.

Here, J's first pause is after "others reading your paper would feel..." on line two. Then, A "filled in the blanks" with the words "at a loss". Line twelve and thirteen show J's second pause and A's completion. The third occurrence is on line eighteen when J paused after "I feel maybe others would...." This time, A said "right, if foreigners read it." The fact that even A did not finish her completion will be discussed later, but I would like to call the readers' attention to the location of pauses in the conversation with regard to their function and the listener's response. More discussion on possible explanations for pauses will follow.

Incomplete Sentences

What do I mean by incomplete sentences? As a matter of fact, the only difference that makes them a separate category from pauses is that they are not responded to by either the speaker or the listener. In example (3), although speaker A did not complete the sentence "if foreigners read it", both A & J understood what was meant and neither bothered to complete it; it was probably deemed unnecessary. By completing half of the sentence, A showed J she understood J's criticism already; therefore, there was little need for either of them to finish the utterance anyway. At the same time, J might not want to verbalize the rest of her comments, which would make the criticism more explicit than necessary.

Examples (4) and (5) below further illustrate that leaving a sentence unfinished is common for speaker J.

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(4)

1 B	你 其实 已经把 这概念 讲出来了，但是你好象	
	you actually already this concept speak out but you seem	
	You actually have expressed the basic idea, but you seem	
2 A		uh huh
		uh huh
		Uh huh,
3 B	认为 你 没有 特别 明确 所以你 最	
	think you not have particularly explicit so you at the	
	to think you didn't do so explicitly So, you still, at the	
4	后 还是认为 事实上 你 已经 明确了	
	end still think actually you already explicit	
	end still think. As a matter of fact, it's quite clear	

(5)

1 A	所以我觉得你题目选得 很好，而且也讲出	
	so I feel you topic choose very well also express	
	So I feel you've chosen a good topic, and you've talked	
2	你 这个 我是 看懂了， 我不知道	
	your this... I am read understand I not know	
	about.... As for me, I understand it. I don't know if	
3	别人那个...	
	others that...	
	others....	
4 A		uh huh
		uh huh
		Uh huh

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In (5), speaker J was trying to give more positive comments, but she couldn't think of what to say, so J left the sentence incomplete on line 3: "I don't know if others...." Though incomplete, the meaning here is clear: your writing may not be effective for others. It seems to be a politeness tactic. What is worth noting is that the listener does not seem to be bothered or confused by the absence of the rest of the utterance; no questions were asked. Therefore, we might perceive incomplete sentences as an acceptable phenomenon in Chinese discourse: it is the listener who is left to make inferences. I assume that it might even be considered rude or unwise in Chinese discourse to pursue clarifications when the speaker intentionally leaves the sentence incomplete.

Possible Explanations

Why do these Chinese speakers pause within sentences, and what functions do these pauses achieve? One reason for such pauses might be the structure of language. During my talk with speaker A, when asked what she thought might be possible reasons for the pauses in the data, she mentioned that maybe in Chinese discourse, especially with people we are familiar with, we may not have thought out everything carefully before we actually start to talk. As a result, during the process we need to pause and think more. If this is the case, the discourse phenomenon is then related to the structure of the Chinese language. As topic-comment structure is quite common in Chinese, interlocutors sometimes start the conversation with just a topic and then pause after the topic in order to plan what he/she wants to say as well as to provide the listener with time for processing information and comprehension. The need for pause might then be partly accounted for by the topic-comment structure of Chinese. But this is only a supposition; we need more empirical evidence to show the validity of such a claim. As the focus of my study here is on pauses and co-construction, I will not examine the pauses following topics in discourse in this paper.

The second possible explanation for pauses in the taped peer review discussions seems to be politeness considerations. A close look at example (3) enables us to identify the critical location of pauses and consequently, the purposes: all three pauses by speaker J occurred before utterances containing FTAs. Particularly in both the first and the last cases, the pauses occurred immediately before the key word or phrase which conveyed speaker J's opinion of the weakness or problem in speaker A's paper. Therefore, it is likely that the reason J paused is that she was giving A a hint, or a friendly warning about the forthcoming FTAs so that the listener would be prepared for what was about to come. In her interview, J also mentioned that because she was trying to verbalize criticism, she wanted to be careful in choosing the right words, thus the pauses. Moreover, with a pause, in reality, the speaker was giving her interlocutor an opportunity to volunteer to express those "harsh" words. In this way, the job of "finding fault" was taken care of and the speaker would not have to risk "hurting" her partner. The result of both the first and last pause in example 3 was that the listener did voluntarily complete speaker J's unfinished utterances: for the first pause, A came up with "at a loss", which was actually a criticism of her own weakness in her paper. For the third pause, A again latched onto what J said, though she did not finish it either. Indeed, J succeeded here in avoiding giving a direct statement of criticism, yet her message was clear to A. Apparently, in the case of the Chinese peer review discussions analyzed here, hesitation signals the presence of FTAs, as is manifested in the pauses. Furthermore, pauses also seem to function as a means to mitigate face threatening acts.

The third possible reason for pauses might be a discourse convention. In my interview with speaker A & J, the two Chinese women whose peer review discussions were part of my data, both of them commented that it was quite common among NSs of Chinese to pause and to complete the speaker's unfinished sentence in conversation. A commented, "If I don't respond to the speakers's pause, it gives the impression that either I am not being attentive or not showing understanding. Sometimes it can also be awkward if you as a listener do not come in and help when the speaker is searching or pausing for words." For native speakers of Chinese then, pauses may be invitations for co-construction, chances to demonstrate support, understanding, solidarity and enthusiasm. All of these, in a sense, bear some resemblance to the function of minimal response discussed in the literature on gender and language.

A final aspect that we should take into consideration is Chinese culture: it is highly valued in traditional Chinese culture to be implicit and subtle; therefore, discourse practice might reflect the expectation to be implicit. It is generally acknowledged that the better you know your friends, the less you will need to verbalize your thoughts in order to communicate; that is, using fewer words or being implicit is an indication of the degree of intimacy. We even have an idiom that emphasizes the value of silence: "silence at this moment communicates better than verbal expression." It is particularly relevant in contexts of intimate relationships when words are deemed insufficient to express our strong feelings.

The Context: With Whom and When

Though pauses are not uncommon in my data, they differ from one speaker to another in frequency and type, with speaker J showing most frequency (18 pauses compared to C's 3 and L's 5), regardless of pause types. In terms of co-construction, speaker A completed her partner's sentences more than any other participant in the study. Obviously, individual and personality factors plays an important role in sociolinguistic behavior, but there are also other factors involved such as role relation and social distance considerations. Moreover, in the Chinese context, age is a significant element affecting social and linguistic behavior. In my interview with speaker A, she mentioned that the more familiar the participants are with each other or the shorter the social distance between them, the more likely and frequently she would "cut in", showing rapport and enthusiasm in completing others' comments. "With my friends, I wouldn't have to worry about their thinking of me as rude because we all know each other well. But with my parents or teacher, I wouldn't do that. I will listen till they finish to show respect and to maintain the distance."

It is also interesting to examine the interaction in (6).

(6)

1 C 然后 在你那篇作文中间，我觉得那个例子
then in your this essay middle I feel that example
Then in your essay, I feel that the examples are not

2 不是特别好... 通常 给的 都是特别的， 比如说
not is give very ...common give all are very exceptional for example
very... common, they are rather exceptional, for example,

3 是 小孩子 那么 我觉得应该用 换成
is kid so I feel should use change
about kids so I think you should use change into

4 L uh huh
uh huh
uh huh

5 C 比较
more...
Something more...

6 L 就是 用 比较多方面的 例子
then is use more all kinds example
You mean use all kinds of examples

7 C 对，
right
right

Now it is the female speaker C talking. She had four pauses altogether in her whole utterance, yet it was only at the fourth one that the male speaker responded when he said, "you mean use all kinds?" Here, L's completion seems to be as logical as C's completions, but the fact that L did not respond to C's other three pauses is worth exploring.

What might be the explanations for L's not responding to C's first three pauses? One possibility is that he was not able to make inferences because C's intended meaning was not clear yet. This might account for his lack of response to the pauses on line 2 and line 3. This does not seem to be a logical explanation, however, for the third pause, because it was not difficult for L to predict what C was trying to say. An alternative explanation could be that L did not want to show he was eager to complete C's utterance, or that L did not agree with C completely and therefore he refused to respond to the pause.

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As I only have one male participant in my data, I am unable to observe possible variance between men and women regarding pauses and co-construction. From this preliminary study, two out of the three women tended to complete the other's utterance much more frequently and actively than the man, while one woman had four times as many pauses as the other two. It is difficult, and unwise, to account for the difference based on the limited data and the small number of participants. Ferrara's study (1992) based on therapeutic discourse, however, suggests neither gender nor role asymmetry in joint production of discourse. It would be interesting to examine the effect of gender on joint production in Chinese.

The Chinese data on pauses and co-construction have provided us with some empirical evidence of the existence of the phenomenon in Chinese discourse, but it does not enable us to arrive at generalizations as to how typical this discourse behavior is for other, or most, Chinese speakers; nor do we know how frequent these interlocutors manifest pauses and co-construction in other situations. In fact, it would be helpful to examine the particular context of peer review and identify characteristics which might have contributed to the occurrence of pauses and co-construction.

It is interesting to note that a considerable amount of data on co-construction is based on studies of therapeutic discourse in English. "Data from psychotherapy are particularly relevant because the setting calls for concerted purpose and the establishment of rapport, conditions which appear to foster joint action" (Ferrara, 1992, p. 208). If the establishment of rapport is one of the primary goals of therapeutic discourse, peer review discussion shares with it the feature of rapport maintenance, even if there is little else in common between the two speech events.

In peer review, students in the same class carry out the task of reading and responding to each other's draft. Because these students are classmates who maintain repeated contact, it is possible that they will be more concerned with rapport building than participants in other situations where there is less contact. In addition, the nature of the peer review task--giving feedback and offering criticism--implies some FTAs. It therefore makes participants more concerned about rapport building, and calls for the politeness tactics on the part of the participants which are discussed in peer review literature (eg. Johnson & Yang, 1990). We should also remember that these participants were reviewing each other's essays, so they were playing the same dual role: as readers and writers. This shared role will naturally enhance their empathy and understanding of each other and their understanding of the difficulties they encounter in the process of writing. Moreover, in the case of the Chinese participants in the ESL freshman composition classes, there may be another contributing factor: the fact that they speak the same native language may enhance the feeling of closeness between the interlocutors, and they may have considered each other belonging to the in-group, of inside relationship. The manifestation of co-construction might be partly accounted for by their perceived intimate relationship, or special affinity to each other, in a class of peers with different ethnic backgrounds. In short, a number of factors might have resulted in the need for empathy, understanding and rapport building in the context of peer review discussion.

Pauses and Responses to Pauses in Comparison

The word "response" might sound odd to readers here as pauses are not usually supposed to be responded to. I choose the word purposely, however, for I believe that pauses, in addition to serving the need for the speaker to think during conversation, may be perceived as a kind of indicator calling for feedback in Chinese conversation. Participants may have that understanding and expectation although further empirical support is required to validate the argument.

Is the phenomenon of pauses and co-construction typical of Chinese discourse? As this is only a pilot study on a very small scale, this question would be difficult to answer until more studies are conducted. What is obvious from the data here is that this is certainly an aspect of discourse worth further investigation. It might surprise the reader to note that within the whole speech event, three out of four speakers used pauses within the sentence, ranging from 3 (C), 5 (L), to 14 (J). At the same time, all four NSs of Chinese completed his/her partner's sentence at least once (speaker J and L), particularly with Speaker A. Based on the manifestation of pauses and co-construction by different speakers in my data, it would be erroneous to perceive this phenomenon of jointly-constructed discourse as simple coincidence.

By comparing my Chinese data with the English data, I intended to find out how similar or different the conversation styles were with regard to the use of pauses and responses (although I had no idea what I was looking for precisely when I recorded the conversations). Do American students pause as often? Where do they pause? How do their partners respond? Listening to the taped discussions, I found that the speed at which NSs of American English spoke seemed to be faster than that of NSs of Chinese. There were also fewer pauses within sentences. More importantly, the way the Chinese participants reacted to their partners' pauses does not seem to bear much resemblance to reactions in the peer discussions of the American students.

In example (7), there is one pause but there is no response from the listener.

(7)

1.R: If it's anything John F [Kennedy, everybody just
2.K: [I know, it's like I know,
3. Kennedy is like... no matter what he] says,
4.R:] right, it's always
5. good, it's always Right.
6.K: it's guaranteed.

(8)

1.D: It was like... [but it wasn't... it wasn't really clear.
2.W: [You weren't sure?

For example (8), we do see some interaction taking place. Here, D paused twice, and she seemed to be searching for words (words for criticism actually). Her partner W made an utterance in response to the pause and it seems to offer us two points for consideration: first, it happened to overlap with D's second attempt of expressing herself, which might suggest that D did not exactly anticipate W's response. Secondly, "You weren't sure?" is a sentence on its own, unlike some of the Chinese versions of joint construction of discourse presented earlier which would be part of a sentence that would fit into, or complete, the speaker's unfinished utterance. If W had actually said "unclear" or some other words, it would share more similarity with the Chinese data, but a whole sentence of "You weren't sure" is certainly quite different.

(9) (Reading from the guideline questions for peer review from the instructor)

1.D: Were we unbiased? Sometimes you can tell you're really ... [into it.
2.W: [like against it?
3.D: You're really against it.

Example (9) provides us with the closest counterpart from the English data to the pause and joint construction phenomenon we discussed for the Chinese data. Apparently W here was trying to respond and help D express herself, but it is worth noting that his "like against it" was only uttered after D's "into" was half way through. It might be that he was trying to help, but did not want to appear rude by interrupting or to appear imposing. In addition, D did not seem to anticipate W's utterances either.

The data in my study seem to have profiled different pictures of the use of pauses and joint production of sentences by native speakers of American English and native speakers of Chinese. For the Chinese speakers, pauses occurred more often within a sentence and joint productions were more common. Native speakers of American English did not manifest similar discourse behavior in a similar setting. One factor that might, or might not, have contributed to the difference between the two language groups is that the peer review discussions in English were conducted by cross-gender pairs, i.e. between a man and a woman, while the peer reviews in Chinese were between a man and a woman in one case and two women in the second case. Although an attempt was made to make the pairs in both language groups as comparable as possible, there was only one male Chinese student in the classes being studied. It is not clear, however, to what extent the differences regarding pauses and co-construction between the two population groups evidenced in this study reflect the cultural discourse behavior of each speech community in general, i.e., American English and Mandarin Chinese.

CONCLUSION

The small number of participants on which my data is based compels me to be very cautious about my findings with respect to the comparison of discourse behavior between native speakers of Chinese and native speakers of American English. It would be hasty and premature to attempt to offer any conclusions at this point. What is obvious, though, is that co-construction, a discourse feature studied in American English, also seems to be evident in Chinese discourse, perhaps even more prominent, as is manifested in the peer review study here. Further investigations in different contexts and among participants of different role relationships in different speech communities would enable us to gain further insight into the phenomenon; such studies would also inform and benefit second or foreign language teaching in a significant way.

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TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

1. "..." indicates pause
2. " " indicates two people speaking at the same time
3. " " indicates the second utterance latched onto the first one without perceptible pause
4. "__" indicates co-construction

[The transcription conventions are based on Tannen (1984), with the exception of the last one, which is based on Ferrara (1992).]

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"I MUST BE SEATED TO TALK TO YOU": TAKING NONVERBAL POLITENESS STRATEGIES INTO ACCOUNT

Elizabeth de Kadt

The paper presents the case for a broader approach to the study of politeness strategies, as has been increasingly demanded by linguists working on non-Western languages. In the context of the analysis of a role-played dialogue involving a request in the Southern Bantu language Zulu, the paper first locates the speakers culturally, then discusses the sequence of verbal utterances as a whole, and finally attempts to integrate both verbal and nonverbal channels of communication. It can be concluded that status plays a crucial role in negotiating interactions in Zulu, and that posture, gesture and gaze contribute substantially to marking status. This poses the question as to whether, by ignoring nonverbal channels in the consideration of Western politeness strategies, we have not inadvertently neglected an important further dimension.

In the vast range of publications on politeness, one topic has hitherto been largely neglected: a consideration of possible roles of non-verbal strategies in negotiating politeness. This neglect persists in spite of the trend in recent theoretical treatises to see politeness as "the totality of interpersonal forms of behaviour on all linguistic levels", as noted by Held in her recent broad review of work in politeness. (Held, 1992, p. 134) In the same volume of papers, for instance, Janney and Arndt mention "verbal and nonverbal behavior" (1992, p. 21), Watts speaks of "linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena" (1992, p. 43), and Blum-Kulka uses the subtitle "Indicators: verbal and non-verbal means" (1992, p. 261). Yet empirical work in politeness, focussing as it has on the "investigation of specific areas of linguistic structure" (Held, 1992, p. 134) which have ranged from lexical units and illocutionary indicators to speech acts, has been much slower to perceive speech as "complex action", which of necessity leads to the realisation that "linguistic indicators are not in themselves polite... (It is) the interplay of all the linguistic and situational factors (which) generate a polite effect in the hearer...'. (Held, 1992, p. 135)

The meaning of the word 'linguistic' in the above statement is of course open to debate. The data to be discussed below, I will suggest, point strongly to the need to interpret 'linguistic' in a broad sense and to include both verbal and nonverbal channels of communication in the discussion of politeness strategies. Indeed, I wish to argue that we need, in Irvine's terms, to "take in all levels of linguistic organization as well as nonverbal phenomena and the organization of discourse and interaction. These behavioural forms must be seen not only in relation to each other, but also against a backdrop of social contexts, social identities and culturally constituted expectations." (Irvine, 1982, p. 2) The politeness strategies used in an interaction can be described adequately only when all these parameters are taken into consideration.

There have, of course, been some attempts to investigate politeness empirically on this more comprehensive basis. It is surely significant that this has happened largely in the

investigation of non-Western systems of politeness, such as in Thai (Kummer, 1992), Japanese (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989; Ide, 1989), Chinese (Gu, 1990) and some Nigerian languages (Adegbija, 1989). Similarly, problems in applying simple quantifying methods to a Southern Bantu language, Zulu (de Kadt, 1992a) first suggested to me the need for a broader approach, which I attempt to develop in the following analysis of politeness strategies in the second-language English of Zulu-speakers. My discussion is based on a role-played interaction involving a request scenario, which was recorded as a video-tape. I will first locate the speakers culturally, then discuss the sequence of utterances as a whole, and finally attempt to integrate both verbal and nonverbal channels of communication.

The interaction in question (see Appendix) is taken from data collected in the context of an ongoing study of politeness strategies in South African English, Zulu and the second-language English of Zulu-speakers (de Kadt, 1992a, 1992b, 1994, 1995). An approach using simple sentence responses, collected by means of discourse completion tests, indicated substantial differences in politeness strategies between English and Zulu, strategies which furthermore clearly transcended simple sentences, and which Zulu-speakers tended to transfer into second-language English. To explain these differences, it was hypothesized that discourse strategies and the nonverbal channel played an important role; and hence my collection of data was expanded in two directions. On the one hand, role-plays between dyads of speakers were video-taped. On the other, informal in-depth discussions were held with 6 Zulu-speakers from a variety of backgrounds, in which they were encouraged to probe aspects of their cultural background introspectively. While clearly there are limitations on both these types of data, they do enable a first consideration both of politeness strategies in urban Zulu and of patterns of transfer into second-language English.

The speakers in the role-play to be considered here were Zulu-speaking senior students at the University of Durban-Westville in Durban, South Africa, who had, on a voluntary basis, been attending a course in English language skills offered by the university. Towards the end of this course, participants were asked to volunteer for video-taping, which was organised by the English-speaking course leader whom they knew well. Participants were located in an office and were photographed through a one-way window; scene-setting (for which a table and two chairs were provided) was limited in that the position of the camera was fixed. A brief scenario for each role-play was read to the students, who asked questions if necessary, assigned the roles themselves, set the scene and then immediately enacted the situation. The resulting tapes have been transcribed into standard orthography and discussed with native-speakers of Zulu, both on the basis of the transcription and the videos. This particular recording is the sixth of the ten role-plays performed by these particular students: it is likely that any initial nervousness will have worn off.

The two participants have learned English at school over a period of 12 years, including 8 years of English-medium instruction; this has been followed by two years at an English-medium university. However, in the context of the former apartheid system they have probably had relatively little contact with first-language speakers. They speak what could be termed a local variety of second-language English with certain characteristic features (Buthelezi, 1989), some of which might perhaps be explained by transfer from Zulu. Typical examples in the text under consideration are to be seen in line 10, "we are getting so many homeworks": the use of the continuous tense and the pluralization of the noun. On the other

hand, some of the hesitations, breaks in sentence structure and repetitions which might be held to be typical of a learner language can equally be attributed to the spoken form of the interaction, such as in line 7: "it's only the work that is you know I feel it's a bit...", or line 16: "I was going to ask you I was going to ask of you...".

Let us start by considering the scenario given to the participants: "You are a student, Sipho, and your partner is your teacher, Mr. Ngubane. You are late with an assignment and want to ask Mr. Ngubane for an extension. You talk with him in the classroom at school." This prescribes institutionally-based roles which are to be enacted. Goffmann (1959, 1967) has demonstrated to what extent all interactions are based on roles; and clearly, speakers will define the roles they are playing according to their cultural context. What, therefore, is the cultural context of our interactants? As urbanised and educated Zulu-speakers they are located in an ongoing clash between two sets of cultural norms, those of tradition and of modernisation; and it was this clash which I attempted to explore in discussion with my Zulu-speaking informants. I will summarise our conclusions briefly (see also de Kadt, 1994). One of the chief cultural constraints on traditional Zulu society is age, which creates hierarchical age groups generally maintained throughout life. Greater age is held to grant authority over younger people, at no matter what stage in life, and all younger people are required to show respect towards those who are older. This respect or deference, *hlonipha*, is equated by Zulu-speakers with politeness. Furthermore, the members of this highly stratified society are seen primarily not as individuals, but as members of a series of collectives or groups: the groups being a family, a clan, a community, a social role (such as student, teacher, worker), and, simultaneous to all of these, an age group. Conforming to the behaviour expected of one's group signals one's desire for membership in the community. Hence in traditional Zulu society relations are structured by group identities, and by set ways of showing respect to those older than oneself and hence above one in the social hierarchy. However, in the urban areas these traditional norms are coming into increasing juxtaposition with an English-based culture which would see itself as typically first-world and where age is but one of many constraints. Certainly the recent political activism of the youth must also be seen as leading young people to question the subservience to age prescribed by tradition. Within this context education too plays a significant role, as one of the chief instruments of modernisation. Although the position of teachers has become somewhat ambivalent, in many cases (as will become clear below) they are granted considerable power as holding the keys to perceived advancement. In short, while traditional norms are increasingly being questioned in the urban areas, they are still powerful enough to be transferred frequently into English-language interactions.

In Brown and Levinson's terms (1987), the interaction prescribed by the above scenario is a typical *face-threatening* act. Several researchers have recently queried the use of this category for the discussion of non-Western strategies of politeness (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989; Ide, 1989; Gu, 1990; Nwoye, 1992; Mao, 1994; see also Wierzbicka, 1991). Is this category appropriate in our case? While my informants had no hesitation in finding a Zulu equivalent for *to lose face*, they pointed out that this *losing face* is seen in terms of group membership: one loses face primarily by not conforming to group expectations as regards inter-group interactions. Furthermore, it was argued that those of higher status were in greater danger of losing face, in that their roles were more difficult to perform appropriately. On the one hand they must live up to the overriding ideal of *ubuntu*, or humanity, which requires a

certain openness and friendliness towards people of lower status. On the other hand their higher status prevents their associating too freely with others. Although our scenario would seem to be potentially face-threatening especially for the student, young people, as an age group, need to make frequent requests of those in power, and so very specific ways and means of showing the appropriate deference are available and are taught during primary socialisation. However, these apply solely to speakers of lesser status, and the teacher, as the speaker of higher status, has no such clearly defined mechanisms at his disposal. His chief means of *saving face* lies in the general strategy of acceding to the student's request, which will limit his power but demonstrate his ***ubuntu***. Hence acceding to the request will certainly be the preferred outcome of this interaction.

It would seem that, in the given cultural context at least, politeness is not simply a matter of polite or deferent ways of behaving. The more visible deference is only half the equation of mutual politeness: this deference then implicates the hearer to an appropriate - polite - response. By means of deference and appropriate responses social status is reaffirmed mutually. On the utterance level this becomes visible as the joint negotiation of politeness.

Let us consider the structure of the interaction in the light of this claim, bearing in mind that L2-speakers of English may well transfer discourse patterns from their L1. It begins with a greeting ritual, initiated by the student.[1]

1 A: good morning sir
2 B: how how are you Sipho
3 A: yes I'm fine you are sir
4 B: very well thankyou how are you
5 A: I'm OK

Such tightly structured rituals are an integral part of any Zulu dialogue; they are commonly initiated by the subordinate, and are followed by inquiries into health and well-being, initiated by the person of higher status. It will be clear that in this way, roles are already being defined and acknowledged. The address terms used underpin these roles: "sir" is used in lieu of the teacher's personal name, whereas the student is given his personal name, Sipho. This signals his role of student in a Westernized educational institution, for in traditional Zulu discourse a young person, speaking to an adult, would in most cases be addressed as *mfana*, 'boy'. The greeting ritual is concluded by the second half of line 4: with his repeated "How are you" (4), the teacher moves on to the central portion of the interaction: the context leads him to assume that the student probably has come to consult him.

It would not be appropriate in Zulu culture immediately to voice an open request. Instead the student describes his present difficult situation over two moves, which function as grounders.

7 A: //it's// only the work that is you know I feel it's a bit
8 too much now as the exams are nearing and
9 B: oh what do you mean if you say the work is too much Sipho
10 A: I'm kind of stressed eyi we are getting so many homeworks

11 from each subject everyone of you needs some kind of work
12 you know so really it's straineous.

The teacher terminates this with the comment "Ok nono problem Sipho" (13) and then somewhat unexpectedly continues with "what's the problem?" (15). When the possibility of transfer of discourse patterns from Zulu is taken into account, this query can be correctly interpreted as a key phrase in the interaction. In Zulu this phrase, *unenkinga* 'Have you got a problem?' and its pendant *nginenkinga* 'I have a problem' are commonly used in the negotiation of requests and are generally followed by the explicit or implicit voicing of the request. As conventionalised phrases they signal the higher or lower status of the speaker and implicate him/her to the behaviour appropriate to the context. Here it is appropriate to the role of teacher, being of higher status, to facilitate the putting of the request and to listen in a benevolent manner. That his query "What's the problem?" is indeed to be understood in this way is confirmed by the structure of the student's rejoinder: he first brings his request, and only then does he answer to the lexical meaning of the word *problem* by further describing his *problems*.

16 A: I was going to ask you I was going to ask of you to extend
17 the dates for that homework you know the one that has to be
18 submitted today the problem is I couldn't manage yesterday
19 to fit in all my study sessions as well as the homework but
20 I did part of it

The student's use of a mitigated performative in his request "I was going to ask (of) you" (16) must also been seen in this context: it, too, involves transfer of the standard polite request form in Zulu, *(be)ngicela*, 'I am asking'. (An analysis of isolated request Head Acts in Zulu according to the scale of indirectness developed by Blum-Kulka et al (1989) has revealed an unusually high level of directness in linguistic form. (de Kadt, 1992b, 1994, 1995)).

Ubuntu prescribes that the teacher respond benevolently: but he first teases by suggesting quite the opposite.

21 B: why do you think of the extension too (?) rather let us
22 shorten the day

My data would suggest that such teasing behaviour occurs relatively frequently. Possibly it is a function of a tension between the desire to retain power and the need to relinquish it in terms of *ubuntu*. In the context of the model under consideration here it would point to the speaker's power to reject the request, thereby underlining all the more his *ubuntu* in acceding. Be this as it may, such a strategy makes it necessary for the student to voice his solution twice - in all likelihood a stressful situation, in that there are repeated hesitancies.

23 A: no sir I will if you could give me just one day more I
24 think I'll man//age//

27 A: yes a an an extra day will do I think

The final agreement is characterised by statements of trust, promise and (again somewhat unexpectedly) mutual gratitude, involving for the first time frequent overlapping.

28 B: ok because I trust you Sipho
29 A: yes
30 B: because you are faithful no problem
31 A: yes //thankyou//
32 B: //but I I//hope in future I will never never give you
33 //an extension//
34 A: //no I won't// do it again //I promise//
35 B: //thankyou very// much
36 A: thanks very much sir
37 B: ok

Social status has been reconfirmed, harmony has been achieved - and hence expressions of gratitude on both parts are appropriate.

The leave-taking, which is also ritually prescribed, was not performed by the students.

We have considered the interaction on the verbal level, and I have suggested that the politeness strategies utilised have to be understood not so much in terms of individuals acting as rational agents, but rather in terms of an interplay of the roles involved, as defined by the cultural context. Yet what evidence have I hitherto offered that this is indeed the case? After all, my argument has been able to draw only on a few of the utterances, which could doubtless also be interpreted other than in terms of transfer. I would like to suggest that considerable further evidence in favour of my interpretation is available if we expand our data to include the nonverbal channels of communication. For the social status in terms of which politeness is primarily negotiated here is also encoded explicitly by means of posture, gesture and gaze. The roles of the interactants are first constituted in a process of mutual delimitation during the greeting ritual, utilising both verbal and nonverbal channels of communication. Subsequently it is largely nonverbal strategies which in an ongoing process sustain these defined roles: by constantly presenting the roles visually (and possibly paralinguistically), they suggest and reinforce an appropriate production and interpretation of verbal behaviour. In this way, verbal and nonverbal channels jointly underlie the politeness strategies utilised here. However, this claim most certainly does not exhaust the role of the nonverbal channels in communication: two decades of research into kinesics, facial expression, gaze, paralinguistics etc. (see, e.g., Kendon, 1981; Wieman & Harrison, 1983; Wolfgang, 1984; Argyle, 1988; Poyatos, 1992, 1993) have begun to elucidate their varying and important functions in communication in general, which we will not be able to explore here.

This suggested significance of the nonverbal channels as status indicators was confirmed in discussion with my informants. Their input, and my own observation, have enabled the preliminary description of two basic poles of nonverbal behaviour in Zulu-speakers, which my informants term *free* and *non-free*. These behaviours are said to be taught during primary socialisation and, together with appropriate ways of speaking, constitute *hlonipha*, politeness. In an interaction between unequals, the person of lower status is expected to use non-free

behaviours; the person of higher status uses free behaviours. Although urbanisation is doubtless leading to modifications of these patterns too, they have clearly been utilised in the present interaction. Similar ways of signalling lower and higher status have been reported with respect to other African languages, however in the main on a more anecdotal basis.

Let us return to the greeting ritual. The teacher is seated at a table; the student enters and while greeting seats himself: as a subordinate, he must position himself on the same level or lower than his interlocutant. His posture is typically non-free: he sits upright, with knees and feet together, and his hands placed together vertically between his knees; he looks down. The teacher, on the other hand, utilizes free or relaxed posture, leaning back, with legs apart and crossed; he continues using his hands, his gaze may well rest on the interlocutant. In addition the student tends to use markedly softer and slower speech than the teacher. Clearly, verbal and nonverbal channels are reinforcing one another in marking status for the coming interaction.

These types of behaviours are largely maintained during the interaction. We will discuss posture, gesture and gaze in turn. The student maintains the position of his legs and feet throughout. His hands move within a limited radius: they are kept between his knees until line 11, when he begins to use very circumscribed gestures, still keeping his hands close to his knees; this is particularly marked during his utterances in lines 18-20, and again in lines 23 and 27. The gesture used during lines 16-17 is culturally prescribed for a request from a subordinate: The palms of the hands are rubbed together, again in proximity to one's knees.

On the other hand, the teacher changes his relaxed posture several times. It is further noticeable that he uses his hands almost continually, not to gesture but either to straighten his papers or to put something into his pocket. Gesticulation is limited to lines 21-22, during the teasing episode. It is surely significant that his hands become still only during lines 15-20, when he puts his question "What's the problem?" and listens to the response. It would appear that a further indication of higher status may be given by dividing attention between the speaker and other (equally or more important) matters; whereas the subordinate must focus his attention solely on the interaction.

Gaze, which was also mentioned by my informants as highly significant in constituting deference, proved to be much more difficult to analyze. This was partly due to the angle from which the video had been taken: at times it was difficult to ascertain whether the student was looking at the teacher, or past him. There are no studies of gaze in Zulu or in South African English to draw on. Although investigations of gaze in different varieties of British and American English have indicated that gaze shifts frequently and plays a significant role in turn-taking, patterns already vary between these varieties and certainly cannot be assumed to remain constant across completely different languages. Both the student and the teacher shifted their gaze frequently, but there were differences. The student produced the respectful markedly 'downward gaze' described by my informants on a number of occasions; but he varied this with looking at the teacher and past the teacher. The teacher, on the other hand, frequently directed his gaze at the papers he was constantly straightening. Again, gaze patterns underlined the importance of lines 15-21: it was solely during these utterances that the teacher looked at the student for an extended period. Patterns of gaze

would seem to require further clarification and are certainly not as simple as suggested by my informants. Furthermore, with regard to gaze as well, the variety of English under discussion is located within the contrasting patterns of Zulu and South African English; and just as in the school context some Westernized non-verbal habits have emerged (children are for example now required to stand up when a teacher enters the room), so too traditional Zulu gaze patterns may be being affected. In all, it can be concluded that patterns of gaze are also involved in transmitting social status, but on a far more differentiated basis than originally assumed.

Although further clarification and exemplification is desirable, it would seem legitimate to conclude that posture, gesture and gaze contribute substantially to marking status and hence to negotiating the interaction under consideration as polite. In this case at least they must be seen to form an essential part of full data on politeness.

This leads to two further concluding questions. The nonverbal strategies of the system of politeness described here would seem to presuppose a highly stratified society where status is clearly defined and can be explicitly coded, for example as marked differences in nonverbal behaviour. In this context, politeness, as constantly reaffirming the status differential between speakers, would seem to be one of the means by which such a hierarchical society would maintain itself. As long as it can be assumed that these behaviours still coincide with the intentions of the speakers, the analysis of politeness strategies as attempted above is reasonably straightforward. Once the social hierarchy starts crumbling, as is increasingly the case in South Africa, an analysis becomes infinitely more complex, in that possible conflicting significances emerge. Assuming the development of a more egalitarian society, will these nonverbal indicators still retain their significance for a discussion of politeness? Indeed, will nonverbal indicators in this sense be retained at all?

From this question a final one: is it in any way possible to generalise the conclusion, drawn with regard to the second-language English of Zulu-speakers, that nonverbal data are essential to an understanding of politeness? As noted earlier, we have here considered only one possible function of nonverbal communication, the signalling of social status. There are doubtless other ways, too, in which the various nonverbal channels could possibly contribute to politeness. To my knowledge little work has been done in this regard for British or American English, or indeed for any Western language. Is in these societies politeness indeed communicated solely - or largely - by verbal means? Or have we hitherto neglected an important further dimension?

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NOTE

[1]The numbers in the left hand column in the following examples represent the line in the dialogue.

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APPENDIX

Transcription of video-tape of role-play

Scenario: You are a student, Sipho, and your partner is your teacher, Mr. Ngubane. You are late with an assignment and want to ask Mr. Ngubane for an extension. You talk with Mr. Ngubane in the classroom at school.

A = Sipho, B = Mr. Ngubane

A: good morning sir
B: how how are you Sipho
A: yes I'm fine you are sir
B: very well thankyou how are you
A: I'm ok
B: //yah//
A: //it's// only the work that is you know I feel it's a bit too much now as the exams are nearing and
B: oh what do you mean if you say the work is too much Sipho
A: I'm kind of stressed eyi we are getting so many homeworks from each subject everyone of you needs some kind of work you know so really it's straineous
B: ok nono problem //Sipho//
A: //yes er//
B: what's the problem
A: I was going to ask you I was going to ask of you to extend the dates for that homework you know the one that has tobe submitted today the problem is I couldn't manage yesterday to fit in all my study sessions as well as the homework but I did part of it
B: why do you think of the extension too (?) rather let us shorten the day
A: no sir I will if you could give me just one day more I think I'll man//age//
B: //ooh// by the way when do you think you are going to make it
A: yes a an extra day will do I think
B: ok because I trust you Sipho
A: yes
B: because you are faithful no problem
A: yes //thankyou//
B: //but I I//hope in future I will never never give you //an extension//
A: //no I won't// do it again //I promise //
B: //thankyou very// much
A: thanks very much sir
B: ok

TOPICAL STRUCTURE IN ARABIC-ENGLISH INTERLANGUAGE

Ahmed Fakhri

This study compares the topical structure (TS) of Arabic and English in order to determine whether Arab ESL learners transfer potential differences between Arabic and English in their English writing, or whether they use an altogether different TS indicative of developmental factors. For this purpose four sets of data are directly compared: Arabic texts, English texts, English essays by Arab ESL learners, and English essays by non-Arab ESL learners. The results show that the null hypothesis of no differences between the topical structure of Arabic, English, and the English writing of the Arab subjects cannot be rejected. It is argued that textual features of expository prose might have masked potential differences in the data considered and that TS analysis alone is not sufficient for capturing the Arab subjects deficiencies in developing topics.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In spite of their command of English sentence structure and lexicon, many ESL learners experience difficulties in their English writing, and often fail to produce acceptable coherent texts. While some researchers argue that the writing problems L2 learners encounter are developmental in nature and are faced by any inexperienced writer (Mohan and Lo, 1985), many attribute L2 writing difficulties to the transfer of L1 writing strategies and modes of text organization. The transfer explanation of L2 learners' writing problems is based on the assumption that text organization and writing strategies vary from one language to another. Kaplan's (1966) classic article claims that Arabic, Romance, and Oriental languages exhibit rhetorical patterns that are very different from those used in English. While such initial explorations of rhetorical contrasts among languages may have been simplistic and often based on pure impression, they have triggered much more reliable research in contrastive rhetoric (cf. Leki, 1991).

Recent studies in contrastive rhetoric (CR) have investigated general patterns of text organization as well as particular discourse features in English and other languages. Hinds (1980) analyzed paragraph structure in English and Japanese and found that while the structure of English paragraphs is hierarchical, Japanese paragraphs "tend to be organized by a return to a baseline theme at the initiation of each subtopic" (p. 117). Purves (1986) showed that languages may vary according to such parameters as ornamented versus plain discourse, or propositional versus appositional discourse. Clyne's (1987) investigation of English and German academic texts indicated that, in contrast to English texts, German texts were non-linear, asymmetrical and discontinuous, and included fewer definitions and "advance organizers" which state explicitly the organization of texts.

Further research adopted an interactive approach to text analysis in which notions such as reader-writer relationship and awareness of audience are central (Connor, 1987; Hinds, 1987). In this approach, texts from different cultures were found to exhibit, for instance,

characteristics reflecting the degree of responsibility assumed by the writer or the reader. Thus, whereas English is a writer-responsible language, i.e., it is the writer's responsibility to accommodate the reader and be aware of his/her possible reactions to the text, Japanese is claimed to be a reader-responsible language (Hinds, 1987).

The implication of such cross-linguistic differences for L2 writing is that L2 learners may transfer L1 text features when producing L2 texts. Bartlett (1983) suggests that Navajo and Apache speakers use "a native technique of rhetorical redundancy" for expressing emphasis in samples of their English writing. Ostler (1987, p. 184) also claims that, because of the rhetorical style of Classical Arabic, "the prose style of Arabic-speaking students writing in English has been shown to be quantitatively different from that of English-speaking writers." The Clyne study mentioned earlier shows that "English texts by German scholars tend to contain the same cultural discourse patterns as German texts" (Clyne, 1987, p. 233). In a comparative study of narratives written in English by Vietnamese, Arabic-speaking Lebanese, and native English-speaking sixth and eleventh graders in Australia, Soter (1988) points out the existence of differences in patterns of narration among these three groups. The author admits, however, that attributing these differences to "cultural influence" would be speculative.

The present study is intended to build upon this research on CR, using a more reliable research methodology. It is believed that the ground-work in CR is advanced enough that a more rigorous methodology is called for in order to avoid unsupported claims and surface generalities and enhance CR as a viable paradigm for investigating L2 writing problems.

The specific purpose of the present study is to contrast the topical structure (see discussion below) of English and Arabic expository texts and determine whether potential differences between the two languages result in transfer in the English writing of Arab ESL learners, or whether these learners use an altogether different topical structure indicative of developmental factors. Four sets of data will be directly contrasted: Arabic texts, English texts, English writing by Arab ESL learners, and English writing by non-Arab ESL learners. This approach has two main advantages often lacking in other CR studies. First, the inclusion of L2 data by non-Arab subjects strengthens the evidence for transfer. In this respect, Gass (1984) argues that a second language learner's use of a form similar to a form in his/her native language does not constitute sufficient evidence that transfer has occurred. A further requirement for the proof of transfer is a comparison between speakers of the language with the pattern in question and speakers of other languages.

Second, instead of relying on impressionistic discourse contrasts from various sources, this study examines actual text samples from Arabic and English. This is essential because of the complexity and elusiveness of text analysis. A transfer study involving phonology or syntax, for example, may rely to a large degree on the results of a previous contrastive analysis of the languages considered, since for the most part phonological and syntactic contrasts are more straightforward and the method of their identification is well-established (James, 1980). This is not the case for language analysis at the discourse level. Discourse analysis methodology is relatively new and often lacks uniformity. The direct comparison of native and non-native data using the same constructs and measurements reduces the risk of inconsistency.

This study seeks to answer the following related questions:

(1) Are there differences between English and Arabic with respect to their topical structure?
(2) If the answer to 1 is positive, do Arab ESL learners transfer their L1 topical structure into their English writing?
(3) If the answer to 1 is negative, does Arab ESL learners' English writing exhibit a topical structure which is different from their L1 and L2?

Questions 1 and 2 are standard questions for showing transfer. Question 3 is intended to determine whether the potential deviances in the topical structure of Arab learners' English writing is developmental in nature and is thus indicative of their inexperience as writers. If indeed their L2 writing topical structure is at variance with the norms of both Arabic and English, this will constitute strong evidence that the writing problems they encounter are developmental rather than transfer-related.

TOPICAL STRUCTURE

Topical structure refers to the patterns of topic maintenance and shifts across sentences in a text. Topical structure analysis originated from the work of the Prague School linguists such as Mathesius and Danes who viewed sentences as comprising two parts: the theme, what the sentence is about, and the enunciation or rheme, which is what is said about the theme (Vachek, 1966). Such notions were then extended to analyzing text patterns in terms of the continuity or shifts of topics across sentences.

The present study adopts Lautamatti's (1978) version of topical structure analysis and draws upon the practical guidelines suggested in Schneider and Connor (1990) for the identification of topical progressions.

Lautamatti distinguishes three types of topical progressions. In a parallel progression, the topics of a sequence of adjacent sentences are referentially identical as shown in (1) where the sentence topics are underlined.

(1) A US-Soviet agreement on weapons uranium would not just provide economic incentives to dismantle weapons but also would set useful precedents for dealing with the more difficult issue of plutonium stocks and for dismantling additional nuclear weapon systems. Such an agreement would go far in satisfying non-weapons states that the superpowers are finally keeping their part of the bargain in the non-proliferation treaty. It would also provide a basis for international involvement in the post-Soviet republics that have nuclear activities...

In a sequential progression, the topics of adjacent sentences are different as in (2).

(2) Japan and Israel are building sleek new ships with smaller radar signatures. France is developing a cruise missile and Germany a remotely piloted

reconnaissance aircraft with Stealth features. Moscow is working on radar-eluding planes.

Finally, an extended parallel progression involves the return to a topic interrupted by a sequential progression as in (3).

(3) Mr. Yeltsin called for an independent judiciary that would be an equal third branch of government. The Judiciary would be strengthened by immediate salary increases and by lengthy terms of office with safeguards against removal. Mr. Yeltsin had already turned the Communist Party building in Russia over to the judiciary for use as courts.

The choice of topical structure as the focus of this study is motivated by the following considerations. First, topical structure analysis probes an important aspect of texts, namely the patterns of maintenance and shifts of topics. Such patterns contribute considerably to the coherence of texts, to the identification of what a particular stretch of discourse is about, and, consequently, to the comprehensibility of texts. Second, topical structure analysis allows for the quantification of data (see discussion of procedure below), which makes the study more reliable and counterbalances the many claims and conclusions based on subjective impressions. Third, the application of topical structure analysis in the context of language teaching suggests that the quality of writing is in part dependent on the patterns of topic distribution. Witte (1983a) showed a correlation between the types of topic development and the quality of writing by native speakers of English. In another study of topical structure and students' revisions, he found that the better revisions involved more elaboration on fewer topics (Witte, 1983b). Following Witte, Schneider and Connor (1990) applied topical structure analysis to ESL essays. Their findings suggest that the frequency of types of topical progressions differentiate high- and low-rated ESL essays.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Data Sample

The data for the study consist of 20 English texts, 20 Arabic texts, 20 English essays written by Arab students, and 20 English essays written by non-Arab students who are speakers of Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese and Thai. Ten of the English texts and ten of the Arabic texts were taken from the New York Times and the Arabic newspaper Assarq al awsat "The Middle East," respectively. The Arabic newspaper is comparable to the New York Times in that it is also designed for a sophisticated readership. The rest of the native texts were from English and Arabic collections of essays used for teaching, reading, and writing.[1]

The non-native essays were written by students in the ESL composition program of a midwestern university and scored by the program instructors for the purpose of placement in appropriate composition sections. These essays were selected so as to obtain comparable quality of writing between the Arab group and the non-Arab group. The mean scores were 6.27 for the non-Arab subjects and 6.29 for the Arab subjects out of a possible maximum

score of ten, indicative of native-like writing. Both groups are homogeneous as indicated by the relatively low standard deviations (SD = 1.13 for the non-Arab group and SD = .98 for the Arab group). These data are deemed particularly suitable for a transfer study of discourse features since they represent a proficiency level advanced enough to allow the obtention of samples of connected discourse of reasonable length, but not so advanced as to be impermeable to potential transfer of L1 discourse features.

Both native and non-native data are comparable in terms of the discourse genre used! namely, they represent samples of expository prose, which in Longacre's terms "explains a body of subject matter" (Longacre, 1976) and exhibits logical rather than chronological linkage. They also deal with similar content, namely socio-cultural and political issues. In order to avoid the effect of any one author's individual writing style, the native texts selected were written by different authors.

Text Analysis

The data were analyzed by the author of the study, a native speaker of Arabic who is familiar with both the structure of Arabic and the structure of English. The analysis was done in the following way. First, in spite of the definition of sentence topic as to what the sentence is about, we still need to operationalize this construct, since both languages considered in this study, Arabic and English, are not topic-prominent languages with special surface devices for marking topics (Li and Thompson, 1976). The following remarks and examples are intended to clarify what is considered as sentence topic in this study. As indicated in examples 1-3 above, as well as in data from other studies of topical structure such as Schneider and Connor (1990, p. 413), sentence topics tend to coincide with grammatical subjects. However, in some cases the two constructs do not match, as illustrated in the following examples, where the underlined noun phrases are considered sentence topics (i.e., what the respective sentences are about).

(4) As for Congressman Smith, the jury found him guilty.
(5) It was impossible for the president to leave.
(6) There was a soldier in front of the gate.
(7) It was Professor Johnson that the committee suspended.

In brief, the grammatical subject is considered to be the sentence topic unless indicated otherwise as in the special constructions given above. This view of what constitutes a sentence topic was largely corroborated by psycholinguistic data collected from 18 native speakers of English. These subjects were asked to read twenty sentences (see Appendix) and to decide which of two nouns best indicated what they thought the sentence was about in each case. The nouns in subject position were chosen 85% of the time. In special constructions such as (4)--(7) above, the target nouns (i.e., nouns in the same position as the ones underlined in 4-7) were chosen 75% of the time.

Second, the identification of the various progression types is crucially dependent on what constitutes semantic sameness of two sentence topics. In this study, a sentence topic was considered identical to a previously mentioned topic if it is encoded as an exact repetition or a synonym of that topic, or as a coreferential pronoun. In addition, since Arabic

does not allow pronouns in subject position, the morphological marking of subject-verb agreement in this language was considered as fulfilling the same anaphoric function as pronouns in English. In other words, if the agreement morpheme on the verb in a particular Arabic sentence is coreferential with the topic of the previous sentence, these sentences are considered as having the same topic and thus constitute a parallel progression.[2]

Statistical Procedure

The frequency of each type of progression was computed for each text and expressed as a percentage of the total number of progressions. The percentages were then averaged across texts in each of the four sets of data. The independent variable in the study is groups with four levels (Arabic, English, Arab S., and Non-Arab S.). There are three dependent variables: the percentages of parallel progressions, sequential progressions, and extended parallel progressions. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine whether group means were significantly different. The MANOVA test is appropriate since it takes into consideration the correlation between multiple dependent variables (Bray & Maxwell, 1985, p. 9). The alpha decision level used is .05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 (see next page) gives the descriptive statistics for the different types of progressions in the four sets of data.

Table 2 gives the results of the MANOVA, using the most common multivariate test statistics: Wilks's lambda, the Pillai's trace, the Hotelling-Lawley trace, and Roy's greatest root (Bray & Maxwell, 1985, p. 27).

Table 2: MANOVA for the Hypothesis of no Overall Group Effect.

Statistic	Value	F	Num DF	Den DF	P
Wilk's Lambda	0.81363	1.77124	9	180.24	0.0765
Pillai's Trace	0.19497	1.76092	9	228	0.0768
Hotelling-L. T	0.21849	1.76415	9	218	0.0764
Roy's GR	0.14773	3.74273	3	76	0.0145

Only Roy's greatest root showed a significant difference among the four groups. Given this result, two follow-up tests, the Least Significant Difference (LSD) test and the Bonferroni procedure were used to determine which group means were different. The Bonferroni procedure yielded no significant differences between any of the groups on any of the dependent variables. The LSD showed a significant difference between the Non-Arab texts and the English texts for parallel progressions, and between the Non-Arab texts and the Arabic Texts for sequential progressions. These significant differences are, however, irrelevant for the purpose of this study.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Types of Progressions

Group	Sequential			Progression Type Parallel			Extended		
		$\bar{x}$[a]	SD		$\bar{x}$[a]	SD		$\bar{x}$[a]	SD
Arabic	(26.50)[b]	74.35	12.88	(5.45)	15.29	8.33	(3.95)	10.36	8.92
English	(33.90)	72.62	11.74	(5.90)	12.36	8.06	(7.75)	15.00	6.48
Arab S.	(8.35)	67.38	17.73	(2.80)	20.56	19.32	(1.45)	12.05	8.98
Non-Arab S.	(11.45)	61.93	17.01	(4.15)	22.24	14.33	(2.70)	15.82	15.35

[a]The $\bar{x}$s were obtained by computing the frequency of each type of progression in each text as a percentage of the total number of progressions and averaging these percentages across texts in each of the four sets of data.

[b]The figures in parentheses represent the average number of progression type.

It was suspected that the difference in the length of texts in number of progressions might have concealed differences between group means since the percentage of types of progressions might vary with text length. However, as shown in Table 3, there was no significant correlation between text length and the percentages of types of progression.

Table 3: Correlation Between Text Length and Percentages of Progressions

Progression Type	r
Parallel	-0.1960
Sequential	0.0642
Extended	0.1604

We must conclude, then, that the null hypothesis of no differences between the topical structure of Arabic, English, and the English writing of the Arab subjects cannot be rejected. In the following discussion, I will attempt to explain this finding.

The similarity between the Arabic and English data stems from the prevalence in both languages of sequential progressions, which account for almost three fourths of the total number of progressions. The prevalence of sequential progressions reflects the semantic complexity expected in expository prose. In contrast to the narrative genre, which is characterized by simple chronological linkage (Labov, 1972) and the repetition of reference to participants (cf. topic continuity in narrative discourse, Givon, 1983), expository prose exhibits logical linkage between propositions and complex hierarchical patterning of information. Typically, a particular topic is introduced into the discourse and then elaborated upon through the use of various subtopics, which results in a high frequency of sequential progressions. Lautamatti (1978) uses the notion of topical depth to capture the hierarchical relationship among various sentence topics. Figures 1 and 2 give examples of topical depth in an English passage and an Arabic one, respectively. The noun phrases in the charts represent sentence topics. The arrows indicate same topic chains.

Figure 1: Hierarchical patterning of topics in an English passage.

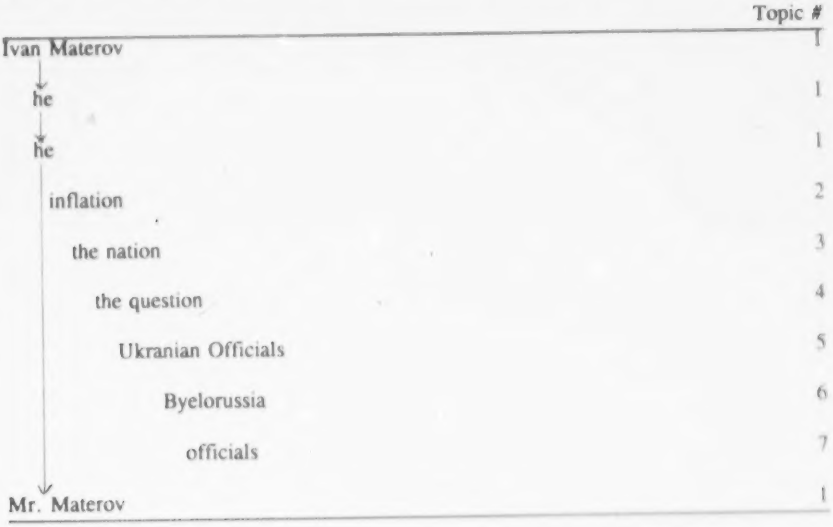
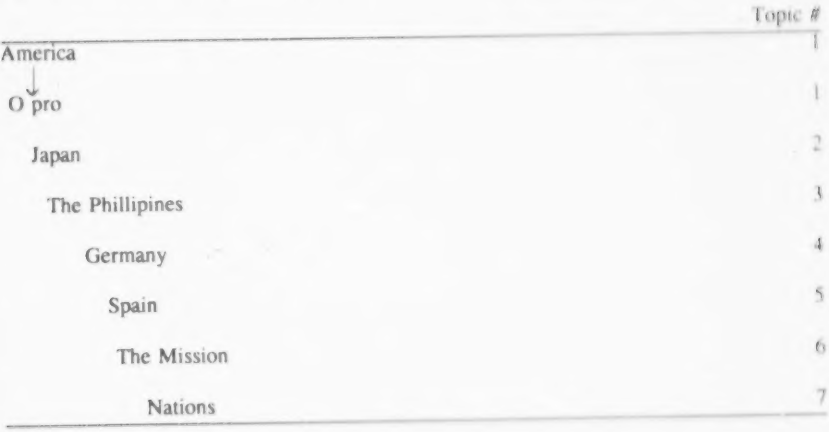


Figure 2: Hierarchical patterning of topics in an Arabic passage.



The two charts clearly show the high frequency of sentences with different topics. However, the coherence of the two passages is maintained partially through the hierarchical relations between the different topics, which do not have the same importance. The most prominent topics are Ivan Materov (Fig. 1) and America (Fig. 2), since they are mentioned first and are more frequent than the other sentence topics. In other words, these passages are mainly about Ivan Materov and America, respectively. Taking into consideration the other sentence topics, the theme of these passages may be stated as follows: "Ivan Materov's views of the situation in the ex-Soviet Union" and "America's relations with its enemies after World War II".

A correlate of the high frequency of sequential progressions is the rarity of parallel progressions in both English and Arabic. The few instances of parallel progressions in the data can be accounted for, at least partially, by considering two linguistic environments in which parallel progressions are likely to occur.

First, many instances of parallel progressions in the Arabic and English texts occur in narrative-like stretches of discourse embedded within the expository texts, as shown in the passages (8) and (9) below. The NBC excerpt is from an English text and the "de Gaulle" passage from Arabic.

(8) NBC carried a Notre Dame football game Saturday and the NFL Sunday. It also stuck to its entertainment schedule for much of Sunday night, including the first part of a mini-series about the life of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. But on Tuesday, NBC was the only network to cover in full the Senate's debate before its 52-48 vote to confirm Judge Thomas.

(9) It was the people that took [de Gaulle] to the highest position. But he was too smart to remain in power for a long time. He made up a reason for his resignation in spite of the attachment of the nation to the leader who saved its honor from a military defeat in 1940. He declared that France lost a battle but not the war. He ended up liberating his country in 1944 with the help of the Western Allies. Then he relinquished power in 1946 with the rise of the Fourth Republic ...

These two passages exhibit narrative features such as the use of the past tense and the chronological linkage of events which is explicitly indicated by time expressions (days and dates)[3]. The relevant feature, though, is the frequent repetition of the same referent in successive sentences, a well-documented property of narrative discourse (see Givon, 1983). Such repetitions result in parallel progressions, as is clearly indicated in the two passages (note the underlined forms). Thus, since narrative-like developments are rare in expository texts, it would follow that parallel progressions associated with them would also be rare.

Second, parallel progressions seem to be associated also with marked linguistic means for signalling topics. In both English and Arabic, sentence topics normally occupy the subject position. However, there are other less frequent ways of signalling topics, such as amma X ... fa ... in Arabic, which is equivalent to "as for X ..." or "as far as X is concerned...". The use of such expressions, which highlight the topicality of a particular referent and draw

attention to it, seems to commit the writer to maintaining the topic so marked in subsequent sentences. In the following example (10) from the Arabic data, the NP the educated person is highlighted as the topic in the first sentence through the use of amma ... fa... "as for ...", and then repeated as the topic of the following sentences.

(10) As for the educated person, whether he is a scholar, a journalist, or a researcher, he secludes himself in his ivory tower, often materially bankrupt. But at the same time, he is free from the stress of difficult issues and equations. Thus, when he openly expresses his thoughts, he does so without ambiguity or pressure to please so and so.

In sum, the similarity between English and Arabic with respect to the frequency distribution of the types of progressions can be attributed, on the one hand, to the semantic complexity of expository discourse, which explains the high frequency of sequential progressions, and, on the other hand, to the paucity of certain linguistic environments, namely narration and marked topicalization devices, which have been shown to be associated with parallel progressions.

The finding that the topical structure of the English writing of Arab ESL learners did not differ significantly from that of English and Arabic should be interpreted with caution. As in the Arabic and English texts, the Arab subjects' essays also exhibited a high frequency of sequential progressions. However, the source of sequential progression in their writing is, in many instances, different from that in the English or Arabic data. In the previous discussion it was shown that sequential progressions in English and Arabic are the result of elaborations on main topics through the inclusion of lower level subtopics. This is not always the case in the Arab subjects' texts. Sequential progressions in these texts often result from the mere juxtaposition of main topics without elaboration. These learners often state main ideas but then fail to elaborate upon them, perhaps because they do not possess sufficient knowledge of the subject matter or because they simply do not feel the need to do so. The mere juxtaposition of diverse unsupported statements or claims tends to result in sequential progressions. The following example from an English essay by an Arab subject illustrates this point.

(11) As we know their are many similarities among animals and humans body. Also there are many vairuses that cause the same illnesses in the humans and the animals. Also we know that God creat all this world for humans to live in it and creat everything for him to use those things for better living.

In this essay, the subject argues for the use of animals in scientific experiments. Excerpt (11) includes three sentences with different topics and states three "arguments": (a) the similarity in the anatomy of animals and humans, (b) the fact that humans and animals catch similar diseases, and (c) the religious belief that God created animals for humans to use. However, there are no elaborations on these main ideas through details or examples. The mere juxtaposition of ideas is indicated by the simple linking device also at the beginning of sentences 2 and 3. In brief then, the pattern of topical structure in the Arab subjects' essays is not quantitatively different from that of Arabic and English, but the underlying source of the types of progression in those essays may not be the same.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to compare the topical structure of English and Arabic in order to understand the topical structure in the English writing of Arab ESL learners. The results of the analysis did not show a significant difference between Arabic and English. This was accounted for in terms of textual features of the writing genre investigated, namely expository prose. The results also show that the Arab subjects' topical structure did not differ quantitatively from Arabic and English. However, it was argued that there may still be qualitative differences between the two sets of data. This suggests that topical structure analysis must be complemented by other types of analysis in order to capture the various aspects of topic development. In this regard, Faigley (1986, p. 129) proposes that the analysis of topical progressions "must be augmented with some way of accounting for semantic associations, such as Halliday and Hassan's notion of lexical collocation."[5]

The approach used in this study, which consists of direct comparison of data from Arabic, English, and English writing by Arab and non-Arab ESL learners, is deemed necessary for providing reliable evidence for cross-linguistic differences and transfer. It is true that it requires thorough knowledge of the languages compared. However, this problem can be overcome through the collaboration of scholars with genuine expertise in the languages investigated. It is hoped that such collaboration will help to eliminate the often oversimplified and unsupported claims of cross-linguistic differences.

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NOTES

[1]These collections are Bloom (1991), Ackley (1992), and the Moroccan Ministry of Education (1989 and 1990).

[2]In Arabic, independent pronouns are used only in special syntactic environments and for the purpose of emphasis on contrast. They do not normally serve a purely anaphoric function. Such function is assigned to verb morphology.

[3]The fact that expository texts in this study contain narrative-like passages should not be surprising. Connor (1987) documented a similar phenomenon. Labov's work on narratives (Labov, 1972) also suggests a certain amount of "genre mixing". The author points out that the "evaluations" component in narratives exhibits complex syntax and a high frequency of logical connectors (e.g., if, because, etc.), features typical of expository texts.

[4]The author is referring to Halliday and Hasan's (1976) work on cohesion in English.

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APPENDIX

Sentence Topic Identification Task

Instructions.

In each of the sentences below there are two nouns which are underlined. Read each sentence and then decide which of the two nouns that sentence is about, and circle it. For example, in the sentence

Mary loves John.

the two underlined nouns are Mary and John. If you think that the sentence is about Mary, then circle the word "Mary." If you think it is about John, then circle "John." Do the same for the sentences below. Please, do not skip any. You must make a choice even if you are uncertain.

Sentence list.

(In the actual presentation of the sentences to the subjects, the sentences were randomized to counterbalance possible effects the order of presentation)

Subject vs Non-subject

1. John has known Bill for a long time.
2. The teacher has decided to talk to the student.
3. A heavy bag fell on a passenger.
4. The agreement was signed by the president.
5. The students insisted on seeing the dean.
6. A car was hit by a truck.
7. The patient talked to the doctor for twenty minutes.
8. The police chief refused to free the suspect.

Special constructions

10. There was a soldier walking with a student.
11. It was impossible for the president to see the congressman.
12. It was professor Smith that the committee suspended.
13. It was the jury that the prosecutor objected to.
14. As for congressman Jones, the jury found him guilty.
15. There is a gunman behind a customer.
16. As far as Mary is concerned, the chairman did not let her take the test.
17. As for the linguistics conference, Mary decided not to participate in it.
18. It is important for the student to call the dean.
19. There was a patient waiting for a nurse.
20. It was Laura who called Mary.